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ZEBULON.

PRIZE ESSAY.



①

PRIZE ESSAY.

ZEBULON;

OR,

THE MORAL CLAIMS OF SEAMEN STATED AND ENFORCED.

BY REV. JOHN HARRIS,

Of Epsom, England.

AUTHOR OF "MAMMON," THE "GREAT TEACHER," &c.

"Zebulon shall dwell at the haven of the sea, and he shall be for a haven of ships." — Gen. xlix. 13.

FIRST AMERICAN,

REVISED FROM THE THIRD LONDON EDITION.

BOSTON:

GOULD, KENDALL & LINCOLN,

59 Washington Street.

1837.

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By exchange of
Duplicates
10 October 1857

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Press of James Loring.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IN the early part of 1836, an advertisement appeared in some of the religious periodicals, and the several Essays written in consequence of its appearance were placed in the hands of the Rev. W. H. Murch, President of Stepney College, and the Rev. John Clayton, jun., A. M., who presented the following report :—

“ Desirous of awakening the whole Christian community to the claims of the British and Foreign Sailors’ Society, several gentlemen of the Committee have originated a subscription to offer a premium of fifty pounds for the best Essay on the moral claims of British Seamen. The proposed title is, ‘ An Essay ; the Moral Claims of Sailors Stated and Enforced, embodying the present condition of the seafaring population, and the duty of the public in general, and all Christians in particular, to promote their moral and religious improvement, and the best means by which this may be accomplished.’ In consequence of this notice, seven-

ral Essays have been written, and sent to the Committee, at whose request we have carefully perused them for the purpose of adjudication. It is proper to remark, that the names of the authors are unknown to us. Whilst, then, we have great pleasure in recording, that some of the other Essays are written with considerable ability, and are well adapted to answer the proposed object, we have no hesitation in arriving at the decision, that this is entitled to the prize. We earnestly pray that this appeal to the wisdom, humanity, and piety of the public may meet with an honest response ; and that, in the hands of God, it may be very instrumental to the bringing in of that glorious period, when ' the abundance of the sea shall be turned toward the Church, and the wealth of the nations shall come to her.' "

W. H. MURCH, *Stepney College.*

JOHN CLAYTON, JUN., *Hackney.*

Nov. 26, 1836.

PREFACE

TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

THE following work is substantially a reprint of *BRITANNIA*, a Prize Essay by Mr. Harris on the moral claims of seamen. It seemed desirable that a production by such an author, on such a subject, should come as extensively as possible before the American public. In examining the Essay with reference to the press, it was found to be so completely English, as to render its *naturalization* indispensable to secure its highest utility among us. The very things, which in part gave it weight and influence in England, unfitted it for our own meridian. We cannot be expected to be moved by the glory of her naval warfare, or to feel the power of appeals based on the extent of her commerce. As far as the argument is grounded on things which are as true of the American as the English sailor, it would be impertinent to make any alterations. It has been our object therefore, to make the Essay, an appeal by Mr.

Harris to the Christians of America on the moral claims of our own seamen. We judged it indispensable to this end, that appeals to sympathies peculiarly English, should be erased, and that the statistics of our own commerce and benevolent operations in behalf of seamen should be substituted for those of England. The original title of *Britannia* has been rejected, and from the various substitutes which have occurred to us, we have selected (not without distrust,) that of *Zebulon*, the name of the tribe in Israel who dwelt by "the haven of ships."

We are not aware of having taken greater liberties with the work, than was necessary to our object, or than is common in England with the productions of American authors. We hope Mr. Harris will not consider his Essay *barnacled* by its passage across the Atlantic. If it shall appear to him to have suffered at our hands, he will impute it to an honest, though misguided desire that he "might have some fruit among us also, even as among other Gentiles."

AMERICAN EDITORS.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

MR. HARRIS, in his Essay, appears to attach less importance to the Sailors' Home, as a means for the intellectual and moral elevation of seamen, than has been usual among us. Perhaps the experiment has not been tried as extensively or under as favorable circumstances in England, as in the United States. As far as it has been made, the benefits derived from it justify us in placing the Home second only to the Chaplain and the Bethel. There are many advantages in this institution which a riper experience will render more apparent, but the following are perfectly obvious to the friends of seamen among us.

1. The Home withdraws the sailor from the influences which have degraded him. The sailor is a homeless man. He usually commences

his career in early life, a wayward boy, sent to sea as the last school of reformation left his parents, or seeking it as the element most congenial to his own buoyant and daring spirit. When he has broken away from the family circle, he seldom revisits it, but floats, like a weed torn from its native rock, where wind and wave may bear him. It is but seldom that he gathers another circle and knows the endearments of husband and wife, of parents and children. He does violence to his nature. He is a lonely, solitary man, with one half of the sympathies of humanity withered within him. In consequence, he has no object for which to live out of himself. He has no motive to be temperate and saving. He is left to the dominion of his passions; and if their indulgence be denied him while at sea, on his return they do but rage the more, like his own ocean, for the previous calm. When he reaches port, how is he met? Not by the respect and kindness of the community he benefits, not by the influences of the gospel he has borne to the heathen, but by the tempter with the cup of death. It is the interest of the landlord, that the sailor should be licentious and intemperate, and while he furnishes the means, he sees to it, that a day or

a week is sufficient to squander the hard earnings of months and years. What results can be expected under such circumstances, from preaching the gospel to seamen. You mingle the truths of the Bible with the coarse revels of the bar and the brothel, and which will have the mastery, the voice of God or of the passions? You can expect no good result. You might as well hope that the scanty and interrupted showers of heaven would freshen the brine of the sea, or stand upon the rocks, which restrain the ocean and scattering the seed broadcast upon its waters, look to see a harvest springing up from its sands and waves. The Home separates him from such influences, and brings him sobered and in his right mind, in contact with good principles and men.

2. In the Home, the sailor is associated with the best men of his own class.

Whenever a Sailor's Home is opened, the temperate, the saving, the aspiring, and the thoughtful will frequent it. Whoever else may come, you will find there the men, who are not contented with the fore-castle, but determined to reach the summit of the profession. You cannot keep them away from its schools, its library, its reading room, or its lectures. The

circle may be a limited one, but still it is large enough to form a public opinion, which exerts a powerful control over its members. The first principles of reform are laid in an entire disuse of whatever intoxicates. The sailor finds himself associated with men who respect themselves, and are respected, and whose whole influence goes in favor of strict temperance. Once a sober man, he learns to accumulate, and the Savings Bank is ready to receive his deposits. A large sphere opens upon him, and with the hope of rising above his present condition, he fits himself for a better. From this hour, he has a stake in the community, and the community have a pledge for his good conduct.

The Sailor's Home too, furnishes an opportunity to the friends of seamen, to form crews of the sober and religious, and to convince the merchant by them of the benefit resulting from efforts for the good of seamen. "When you will send a crew from the Home to New Orleans, who will all return, said a merchant on one occasion, I will believe in it." A crew had been sent to that port and they returned to a man, notwithstanding that triple the wages, they were then receiving, had been offered them if they would desert the ship. They had

learnt that lesson of fidelity to their engagements at the Home, for he who does not do his duty as a seaman, is not fit to be an officer.

3. At the Home, the sailor is associated with Christians, who feel the deepest interest in his welfare, under circumstances which promise the happiest results to their efforts for his conversion.

He has been a lonely man, a stranger to kindness or attention. He has lived in the world, as the rock and the ocean together, in perpetual conflict. He has been the victim of the designing, neglected by the church, and the prey of his own wicked passions. "I feel," said a sailor, who was friendless and homeless, and who for nineteen years had wandered from port to port without a single return to the fire-side of his childhood, "I feel as if I were the last spar left standing after a storm." In the Home, the hand of Christian sympathy is extended to him, and kindness is the more grateful because it has been so unknown before. The truths and blessings of the gospel are urged on his attention, and there is good hope of the result.—He has indeed been separated from the influences of the Sabbath, and the pulpit, and prayer, but not utterly separated from his God. While

the dwellers by the shore grow up to manhood with an indifference to sacred things, arising from their commonness and familiarity, it is amidst the ~~unbelievers of God~~, eternity, and the wonders of his power in the deep, amidst the calm and the storm, amidst deliverances from strange and sudden death, that the elements of his character are combined. And never will you find the seaman, whether excited or sober, who will treat religion or its ministers with other than respect. If he have mistaken superstition for religion, he is far from denying all religion in infidelity. He is open to the approaches of truth. When convinced that God speaks in the Bible and to him, the very training of his calling prepares him to obey at once and heartily. The sailor never questions orders issued from the quarter-deck. If he should, life and property would very often be put in great danger from the neglect of duty, which requires instant attention. The same subordination to authority is carried into religion and the voice of Christ saying, "follow me," meets now as ready an obedience, as when the fishermen of Galilee left all and followed him. At the Home, there is every reason to hope, that his religious susceptibilities will be developed

emblems of God's

aright. He is brought in contact with pious seamen. In the circle for prayer, and conference, he is addressed in his own language by men who know his feelings, his wants, and even prejudices as well as the blessings of a Christian's hope. Their speech is rude, their address is coarse, their illustrations uncouth, but withal, there is an honest and hearty conviction of the truth, and a fervent love of it to which the graces and ornaments of language can add but little. Some men desire that one should come back again from the grave, and reveal its mysteries. Vain wish ! The nearest approach to it, is perhaps the Christian sailor when setting forth the revelations of another life. He has been in the wards of a foreign Hospital and still lives, he has been in the deep, he has been famished and athirst, until he glared with cannibal eyes on the maddened and the dead about him, he has been on the wreck for hopeless days and nights, he has been within the verge of the gates of death, amid the lightning and the storm, and he has come back again almost a resurrection, to utter the truth of God, in the memory of what he hath been and seen and felt. To such influences we entrust the sailor at the Home. Besides, he is

there brought under the influence of a friend and pastor, the minister of Christ in the things of an eternal life. Whatever of good the church can devise for him, whatever wisdom can suggest, whatever prayer may prompt, whatever love may direct, it may and does centre in the Home, to compass his conversion by the grace of God.

No class of the community can be more interested personally in the improvement of seamen than our merchants. They entrust to their care, property to the amount of \$260,000,000 annually. For its safe and speedy transport from market to market, they have no other guarantee from the sailor on the wide ocean, beyond the reach of law, than his own moral character. Whatever tends to make him a wiser and better man, gives security to that property. It were a deed worthy of the merchants of Boston whose wealth has been derived so largely from the toils of the sailor, to rear a Home, with all the appendages of schools, libraries, reading rooms, lectures, &c. which would make it a model to the sea-ports of our land. It would be but justice to the sailor. For who hath made our merchants princes, and our traffickers the honorable of the earth? Who

hath gathered the harvest of the rivers, the revenue of the sea, the treasures hid in the sand, and the peculiar blessings of every clime and poured them out at our feet? Who but the sailor? We have had an existence, as a nation, but little above fifty years, and our commerce threads every river and visits every shore of the earth, whilst its astonishing increase at the rate of 12 per cent., gives promise, that it will soon rival that of England herself. Could we call up from their graves, in the power of an anticipated resurrection, the stout hearts who have carried on this good work, whence would they come? But few indeed from the churchyards of their native village. Few from slumbering with kindred dust in the hope of an associated rising. They would come from the unmarked waves of every shore from the caverns of every ocean, from the solitary rivers and the ends of the earth, where they have found an early and a sudden death. The memory of the dead demands for the living, who are following in their steps, the common benefits of humanity on earth, and the hopes of glory afterward.

To the Christian, the welfare of seamen has an interest into which silver and gold does not enter. Jesus Christ began the conversion of

the world with the fishers of the lake. It was the fulfilment of the promise, "the ships of Tarshish first." The appeal in their behalf comes to us from every quarter, from our cities corrupted by their vices, from the heathen, who stood between our missionaries and our licentious and maddened seamen; from the very priests of idolatry, whose morality, low as it is, loathes the vices of these men; from our brethren, who are constrained to turn aside from the appropriate work of their mission, to preach the gospel to sailors; and from seamen themselves as ceaseless as the moan of the ocean. Shall we not heed it? When Nelson met the combined fleets of France and Spain at Trafalgar, every arm was nerved, every heart beat more proudly as the signal rose to the masthead and revealed itself on the breeze, "England expects every man to do his duty." In another warfare, in a nobler cause, let our watch-word be, "God expects every Christian to do his duty," and then indeed, the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto him.

WILLIAM M. ROGERS.

DANIEL M. LORD.

ZEBULON.

PART THE FIRST.

PART THE FIRST.

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF OUR SEAMEN.

It is impossible for a person to institute an inquiry into the character and claims of our seamen, without soon discovering that his investigations relate to a class of men perfectly unique. A person who steps for the first time on the deck of a ship, and commits himself to the ocean, does not find himself cut off more completely from all his familiar associations, and surrounded by a world of novelty, than such an inquirer finds himself impressed with a sense of strange and original interest. Perhaps, the only class with which sailors can for a moment be compared is the army ; but even here, the points of resemblance are less prominent than the points of contrast. For, while the chief, and almost only feature, which these two classes have in common, is that arising from peril—the peril of war,—the sailor has an element of his own ; perils of his own, arising

from that element ; social and religious privations peculiar to himself ; and, (to say nothing of an exclusive technical phraseology,) he has habits and characteristics arising out of these peculiarities, which he shares with no other class of the community.

Did the limits of this essay permit, we might advantageously prepare for looking at the present condition of our seamen by reviewing their history during the last half century ; and here, a very little attention would soon disclose the unwelcome truth, that their treatment has been as peculiar as their character is unique.

The page of a Smollet, himself a sailor, and drawing from the life, might furnish us with truths so startling and revolting, that the reader of the present day regards them as exaggerations. We might cite unquestionable testimony to prove that "during the last war, when so many sailors were wanted both for the navy and merchant service, every art was used to entrap them, and every species of demoralization encouraged to keep them in a state of dependence." We might advert to the way in which, for years, our ships of war were made receptacles for the polluting refuse of our jails, to the necessary deterioration of the character of the genuine sailor. We might fill page after page with quotations from "Voyages," "Tales," and "Narratives" of those times—a class of books which have lately formed the most popular reading of circulating libraries—exhibiting scenes of license and depravity, especially at

anchor, at which the heart sickens. We might appeal to the survivors of those times, "how common it was to practise swearing to see which could excel in oaths, and to drink to intoxication, with the idea that he who could swear best, and drink most, was the best sailor." And we might furnish abundant evidence to show how justly our ships deserved the appalling names they received, of *floating hells*, and *hells afloat*.

Instead, however, of occupying our pages with details of this nature, we may advert to a fact which virtually includes them all, namely, that in the opinion of the world, generally, the idea of a sailor and of true piety are almost incompatible with each other. Not long since, and even now, in many places, a converted sailor would be regarded by multitudes as no less a prodigy than a converted Jew. If piety ever belonged to our seamen as a class, the traces of it had so completely disappeared, and so long been wanting, that, until recently, the public were not only quite reconciled to its absence, numbers seemed to doubt whether religion *could* be introduced among them, and others even doubted whether it *ought* to be; whether it would not destroy their distinctive character; whether irreligion was not an essential attribute of the class. Now, what must have been the guilty neglect, and the vicious treatment, which could have led to all this depravity of the maritime population, and what must have been the enormity of that wickedness which could

have occasioned and countenanced such an idea !

“ It is true, that for years past their temporal condition has been slowly improving. Our attention naturally turns, in this view of the subject, first, to our National Hospitals. ‘ These have been established at Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and a few other cities, but should a vessel put into Holmes’ Hole, Salem, New London, besides more than fifty other places on the coast, the sick sailor must either pay his own bill or be carried to an alms-house. Besides, where our Government have established Marine Hospitals, they have supported them by a tax of twenty cents a month, deducted from the hard earned wages of the sailor, without regard to his circumstances.’ ‘ The Trustees of the Sailor’s Snug Harbor, have erected a large and commodious building on Staten Island, New York, where some fifty or sixty disabled seamen have found a refuge for life. The annual income of this Institution has already reached the sum of \$32,000. Savings Banks for seamen have already been put into successful operation at Portland, Boston, Warren, New York, and Mobile. Besides these provisions for the temporal welfare of seamen, they have formed themselves into various benevolent societies, for their own relief in case of sickness and shipwreck.’ ”*

But while these laudable though inadequate

* *Sailor’s Magazine*, November 1836.

steps were taken to ameliorate the temporal condition of our seamen, what efforts were made to promote their moral and religious welfare? Our answer to this inquiry must be twofold. In the first place, we have to acknowledge our guilty omissions. While we were reading with transport, from time to time, of their courage, their humanity and patriotism—when every battle was a victory—who thought of aiming to add piety to their list of excellencies? Provided the national fame resounded, the principal solicitude was to meet the great demand for these rough and warlike materials, created by martial consumption. While we read with anguish of the killed and wounded, in our naval dispatches, what efforts were made to impart religious preparation to those who were going out to supply their place, and to follow them into eternity? As if the nation, having destined a good proportion of them to be “food for powder,” felt that it would be inconsistent to be making much of the happiness of living machines, which were so soon to be hacked to pieces or blown to atoms. While we gloried in the proofs they gave that they feared not them who could kill the body, what was done to inculcate the fear of Him “who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell?” As if their souls had been given them merely to render their bodies more serviceable machines, who thought of calling into exercise, and employing, any thing but their physical vigor and courage? And while the necessity of doing something for the *tempo-*

ral advantages of so exposed and deserving a class, forced itself in a manner on the attention of the country, what was Christian benevolence planning or doing for their eternal welfare? The only answer which can be given to these inquiries, is one which may well cover us with shame and confusion of face. Having surrendered them to a foe more dreadful than any which threatened our shores, we saw them perish by thousands, and yet allowed the destruction to go on as uninterruptedly as if we had apprehended a bolt from heaven on moving to prevent it. Their situation was, indeed, a moral anomaly. The most deserving class of the community was the most neglected; was the only class which could be said to have been entirely neglected.

They seemed to have escaped Christian attention. Their depravity had become proverbial, and all were aware of it, yet no man cared for their souls. Conduct which would have shocked us in any other class, was looked for in them as a matter of course. As if religion were not a thing for sailors, no direct endeavors were made to place it within their reach. Efforts were made to impart the *unspeakable gift* to every other class at home and abroad, but as if sailors had been placed under a Divine interdict, as if the charter of redemption had contained a clause excluding them from its benefits, they were apparently avoided and forgotten. "While philanthropy and Christian charity were almost at a stand what to attempt next,

because every thing seemed to be attempted which man could do, even then, with astonishment be it spoken, even then, there was one immense field of labor, stretching itself around the nation, and lying in the most forlorn and uncultivated state. . . . This field was our maritime world !”* The only occasions on which piety approached it on an errand of religious mercy, was when she accompanied her missionary agents to embark for *distant* shores, —the men who were to convey those agents were left to perish. Worse than this ! not only was nothing of a direct nature done to place salvation within their reach, if one of them here and there ventured to approach the means of grace, he was not unfrequently repulsed. Many a so-called Christian seemed to view it as a kind of presumption for a sailor to seek religious instruction ; resented it as an impertinent encroachment on ground belonging exclusively to other classes ; and if he dared roughly to resent the insult which was thus offered to his common humanity, it was paraded as a convincing proof that he was not *fit* for religion, nor religion for him. “ You cannot deny,” said one of them, at the last anniversary meeting of the British and Foreign Sailors’ Society, “ that for a long time you almost every where refused to let sailors come to your churches.† I have been denied admission to the house of

* The *Ocean* by the author of the *Retrospect*.

† Equally true of the Churches of America.

God. It is true, I then cared nothing about it ; I was willing to spend my time in folly, as it appeared the people ashore did not think we had any thing to do with religion." " And many a congregation still," said a lieutenant of the Navy, on the same occasion, " would soon let it be known that sailors were intruders." Not only were they left to famish, but when they sought to gather up the crumbs of the bread of life which fell from our table, they were actually repelled.

" The second part of our answer relates to the utter inadequacy of the means we are at length employing in their behalf. It was only at so recent a date as 1816, that the attention of the Christian public was directed to the moral condition of seamen. A small congregation was gathered in New York by Rev. Ward Stafford during that year, and another in Boston in 1818, by Rev. Dr. Jenks, and another in Philadelphia 1819, by Rev. Mr. Eastburn of Apostolic memory. Since that time congregations, and in some instances churches have been collected, and in connexion with Port Societies at Portland, Salem, Boston, New Bedford, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Rocketts, Va. Charlestown, Savannah, Mobile on the sea-board, and at Cleveland, Buffalo, Utica and Troy on our inland waters. Local Societies have been formed at some of these places, for the supply of seamen within their limits, with Bibles, Tracts and other religious publications. In 1828, the American Seamen's Friend Society

was formed, "to improve the social and moral condition of seamen, by uniting the efforts of the wise and good in their behalf, by promoting in every port, boarding houses of good character, Savings Banks, Register Offices, Libraries, Museums, Reading Rooms, and Schools, with the ministrations of the gospel and other religious blessings, in our own and other lands. This Society has labored for the intellectual and moral improvement of seamen in twelve foreign ports, viz. at Canton, Havre, Marseilles, Smyrna, Honolulu, Rio Janeiro, Cronstadt, New Orleans, Batavia, Singapore, Lahaina, and Calcutta. In the first eight of these places, regular Chaplains are supported entirely by the Society, at an expense (including chapels, &c.) of not less than \$1000 per annum. Several hundreds of dollars have been expended yearly, in providing and distributing Bibles, Magazines, Temperance Almanacs, &c. The Society also publish monthly, 3500 of their Sailor's Magazine.

"In 1836 the American Bethel Society was formed with the object of superintending Bethel operations on the Inland waters, to constitute a bond of union between local Societies, and aid them in obtaining funds and Chaplains, as well as to establish other stations where they seemed to be needed. This Society circulate 1400 of their Bethel Magazine, and provide for the distribution of Bibles and Tracts by their depositories at Detroit, Marietta, Ohio River, Geneva, and Ithaca. The American Seamen's Friend Society is the

largest and most promising of these Associations, but its present resources are entirely inadequate to the accomplishment of its important task : considering the limitation of its funds, (not \$11,000 a year,) and the recent date of its existence, it merits the praise of *having done what it could.*"

But, promising and cheering as these names may sound, their means of making them more than names are so slender, that, when contrasted with the multitude which they seek to benefit, one is inevitably reminded of another multitude and another slender supply, and constrained to exclaim, "*What are these among so many ?*"—nothing but a miracle can make them adequate. Their friends are aware that, at present, they are only employing temporary expedients and provisional measures, that the great mass of maritime evil has yet to be explored, that it is a *mare incognitum* not yet laid down in the charts of general benevolence, that only a few of the Christian public have hitherto cast even a hasty glance towards it,—they feel that the public attention has yet to be aroused to the neglected condition of our seamen, in order to its effective amelioration.

What that condition is might be inferred from the very neglect to which, till of late, it seems to have been almost unanimously doomed. For let any class of the people be consigned to similar neglect, and what would be the speedy and certain result, but ignorance, depravity, and perdition ? What that condi-

tion is might be inferred too from that neglect, coupled with the nature of a sailor's occupation, which takes him away for days, and weeks, and even months, from all the ordinary means of religious improvement. Neglect a landsman, and he may yet surmount the effect of that treatment. He is constantly moving among the signs and mementos of religion. The return of the Sabbath ; the weekly cessation from labor ; the sight of the Bible in his cottage ; the sight of the church, the chapel, and the school, the occasional meeting with religious persons—these, and a variety of other circumstances, combine to prevent the idea of religion from entirely vacating his mind, and may lead him to put forth an effort to obtain that religious instruction to which those around him have neglected to invite him. But neglect the sailor, and the very nature of his avocation, by removing him from the presence of all these valuable religious mementos, and casting his lot on another element, tends to complete the evil which such neglect had begun.

His moral condition, under such circumstances, might be inferred, also, from the high temperament of his character. " Even for his maladies," says Dr. Mower, " a sailor frequently provides a cause that has in it something of the energy of the winds and waves that usually excite him. He does not disorder his nerves, or derange his stomach moderately by quiet sopping or occasional intoxication, but resolutely keeps himself drunk for weeks together ; and

after the most perfect devotion to liquor, till his money is expended, he comes with horrors, and in a wild delirium, to the Seamen's Hospital." His character takes no middle rank, but tends to the extreme either of good or evil. The amount of good which it might be made to produce is unknown, for the experiment has yet to be made; but, like every rich neglected soil, its present produce must necessarily be a luxuriance of evil. Had it been our aim to determine how large an amount of evil it would yield, if left to entire neglect, scarcely could we have conducted the experiment more guardedly, or have waited more patiently to see the result. Alas, that it should be found to produce so much, and that we should be so late in putting a period to the process!

And the moral condition of the sailor, at present, might be inferred—not only from the neglect to which he has been consigned, the unpropitious nature of his calling in relation to the ordinances of religion, and his characteristic energy left to the disposal of his passions—but also from the additional fact, that he is one of a very numerous and closely united class, who keep his irreligion in countenance, and increase it. He seldom emerges, even on land, out of his peculiar circle. From custom, and choice, and circumstances, he confines himself almost exclusively to the society of those who can sympathize with his habits, and understand his nautical phraseology, and lives within sight of that element which is his chosen home. And

by thus constantly moving in the presence of those only who are all like himself, that which was bad in his character becomes worse, until he reaches a point of depravity in which he is in danger of forgetting that it is possible for him, or for any man, to be better.

But in ascertaining the condition of our mariners, we are not left to mere probable evidence. In that case, it might have been suspected that inference had misled us, or that our fears had exaggerated the evils we deprecate. We have, however, access to evidence direct, palpable, convincing. The result of that culpable neglect to which they have been consigned is twofold. First, it has left them to be the prey of the designing and the depraved. Let the reader peruse and ponder the following representation of this fact from the pen of one whose magisterial office, in one of the maritime districts of London, eminently qualified him to speak on the subject :—"Sailors have no friends to put them in the right way ; whilst they are beset on every side by the most voracious and profligate of both sexes, whose interest it is to decoy them into habits of the most senseless improvidence. From the moment they arrive in port, and before they can set foot on shore, till they are not only pennyless, but have exhausted their credit on the most ruinous terms, they are made the victims of a regularly organized gang of land-sharks, who haunt them wherever they go. Calumniated and unprotected whilst they might be able to secure their independence, they be-

come objects of sympathy only when sickness, accident, or old age has reduced them and their families to destitution. A sailor's reception on his return to land is ordinarily a sorry recompense for the dangers and hardships of a long voyage; and in a few days he often finds himself shamelessly stripped of the earnings of as many months. When on the ocean he must make up his mind to be cut off from domestic enjoyment, but when on land, it is too often embittered or destroyed by the profligate system to which he is exposed."*

The other evil arising from our neglect, appears in their extreme depravity. Let any one who is sceptical on this point approach any of the maritime districts of our sea-port towns, and investigate the prevailing character of the neighbourhood. Where is he likely to find the law of the Sabbath more disregarded, or its sacred rest disturbed by more boisterous mirth, or more profane language, than here? Take, for example, the port of New-York. It is estimated that 10,000 seamen are constantly there. Now, deduct the small proportion of those who attend on the worship of God on the Sunday, and of such as may be employed in incumbent duties—where shall we look for the large remainder, and how should we be likely to find them

* From *The Original*; by Thomas Walker, M. A., Barrister at Law, and one of the Police Magistrates of the Metropolis. What was true of London has been equally true of our own seaports.

occupied? And who does not know that the habitual desecration of the Sabbath is either a sign of confirmed depravity, or is one of the most effectual means of leading to it? Where are we likely to find so great a proportion of public-houses and grog-shops, as in this quarter? or to witness so many instances of beastly intoxication? or to hear language more licentious, and imprecations more appalling? Where shall we find so many brothels of the lowest description? or more frequently meet with instances of outraged decency? In a word, where shall we find so large a proportion of the voracious and the profligate living on the vices of others, as we shall meet with in such a neighbourhood, battenning on the wasteful improvidence, and the debasing vices of our seamen? Thousands live on their depravity.

And let the reader remember that this representation applies not to the sailors of some ports merely, but of every port; not to an inconsiderable portion of the community, but to a class consisting of at least 144,000. That exceptions exist, we not only readily but cheerfully admit. That exceptions not only exist, but that in every port where a chapel is built, or a church floats, or an Ark is opened for seamen, they are constantly increasing, we firmly believe. But, alas, their paucity reminds one of the small number which once entered another ark, "wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water." Even taking the calculation of Christian charity, that about 2000 seamen

consistently profess the gospel of Christ, still 142,000,—the great bulk of the class—are in the deplorable condition described. And they are in this state with our connivance, and through our neglect! 142,000 of the most deserving of our countrymen, living, and, through our sinful apathy, dying, without God in the world! He who “when he saw the multitudes, was moved with compassion on them,” looks upon this multitude, and he sees that, like them, “they are scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.” “Verily, we are guilty concerning our brother!”

ZEBULON.



PART THE SECOND.

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PART THE SECOND.

REASONS WHY THE PUBLIC IN GENERAL, AND ALL CHRISTIANS
IN PARTICULAR, SHOULD PROMOTE THE MORAL AND RELI-
GIOUS IMPROVEMENT OF OUR SEAMEN.

WERE the American community to be divided into classes for the sake of distinguishing and weighing their respective claims on Christian effort, what class could establish a stronger claim, or one which might be left more confidently to its own peculiar merits, than that which comprises our seamen? Their condition is one of which the simplest statement is the strongest. It speaks for itself in terms more affecting than any advocate can employ for it.

1. There are other classes, indeed, which would *outnumber* it; but in determining a question of this nature, *number* is only one consideration among many; and, as it will appear in the present instance, a consideration of minor importance.—The claims before us are of a moral nature, and can only be determined by moral considerations.

Let it be supposed, for example, that a whole fleet is in danger of destruction. Three of the fleet can be saved. Their names we will suppose to be Commerce, Manufacture, and Agriculture. The first is supposed to have a hundred souls on board ; the second, two hundred ; and the third, three hundred. But, though all are in danger, the peril of the first, we will suppose, is evidently the most imminent. Would not every principle of wisdom and humanity dictate, that notwithstanding the comparative smallness of her crew, the Commerce should have the benefit of our endeavours first ? But suppose that on nearing her, we learnt that her crew was more than we had expected—that instead of 100, it consisted of 150 souls, and all these in the jaws of destruction—should we not feel so many additional motives for putting forth our utmost efforts to save them ? This fleet is the American community. All its classes are in danger. But we have already seen, and shall presently show more clearly still, that the condition of the maritime class is by far the most perilous and urgent. And because they are numerically less than the manufacturing and agricultural population, shall we leave them, in the extremity of their danger, to perish ?

On ascertaining their number, however, we find that it is by no means insignificant. America has 16,000 vessels, employing 144,000 men. Had their number been only 25,000, that would not have made their exigency less, nor have diminished our duty to save them. But they

amount to ten times that number, and though that does not increase the duty we owe to each, it greatly increases the duty we owe to the whole. Every additional unit should be felt as an additional inducement to attempt their salvation.

2. But this is only one view of the question. It would be easy to show that that class of a community which, numerically considered, is the least important, may yet, morally considered, be the most important. We have seen that the maritime class is important, if on no other ground than its numbers. We would now advert to certain considerations which would invest it with surpassing interest, were those numbers insignificant.

What class can appeal more truly to their past sufferings than sailors? or establish a stronger claim on our gratitude and generosity? Generous themselves to a fault, reckless of danger, and lavish of their blood in the defence of their country, they seem thrown entirely on the nobler feelings of their fellow-countrymen. Who has not been affected while reading that tale of Grecian story which relates that when *Æschylus* was condemned to death at Athens, his brother *Aminias* procured the reversal of the sentence, by uncovering an arm, of which the hand had been cut off at the battle of *Salamis*, in the service of his country? who has not felt the mute eloquence of that appeal? The religious public constitutes a court, not of legal justice, but of Christian benevolence; and as it weighs

the respective claims of the various classes of the community on its regard, does it call for our seamen to appear? Would not the apt representative of that class be a man who had been maimed and mutilated in battle? a manly figure, shorn of its fair proportions, in the service of his country, while we were peacefully pursuing our daily course, or securely slumbering in our homes? And shall he exhibit his scarred and dismembered person in vain? If a warm and undisguised heart can win our regard; if a dauntless courage in encountering enemies, and unbounded generosity in succouring the distressed, should engage our esteem; if the calm endurance of sufferings, perseverance amidst difficulties, and patriotic ardour, should command our esteem, then have our seamen established an irresistible claim on our gratitude and generosity, for in these qualities they have abounded.

3. The services of the naval class, both in the time of peace and of war, make a powerful appeal to our sense of justice. Their profession is far from being of an ordinary description: our situation makes such an occupation indispensable, and yet probably the great mass of the community would revolt at the idea of entering and pursuing it: then, are we not laid under obligations to the class which does devote itself to the occupation? In the time of war, our navy, under Providence, defends our home. "And should war again sound its alarm, it must be to our seamen, as instruments in the hands

of Providence, that we must look for future protection and deliverance. Their ships must form a rampart to begird our coasts ; their bosoms, so often bared to the storm, must then be presented to the enemy's cannon."* Then shall we not provide for the spiritual welfare, the eternal security, of those who watch so patiently, and contend so bravely, for our temporal safety ? In the time of peace, they eminently contribute to our national wealth, and furnish us with many of our domestic comforts. And if they minister to us in temporal things, is it too much for us to minister to them in those which are spiritual ? Oh, were only a thousandth part of the labour, the hazard, the ardour, the costly self-sacrifice, of the maritime class in the cause of the national welfare, to be repaid by Christians in the promotion of its religious interest—if only *justice* were done to it—how large and active the machinery of benevolence which would instantly be put into motion on its behalf !

4. A sense of our past neglect should operate as an incentive to instant exertion and future diligence in favour of our seamen. " We were a people," says one who formerly belonged to them,† " at once caressed and neglected, honoured and despised. Our courage in the battle and the storm was applauded ; our services were acknowledged to be great and meritorious ; our

* The *Ocean*, by the author of the *Retrospect*.

† The author of the *Retrospect*, &c.

wounds were bound up and healed ; and our fame was blazoned through the world. But our moral conduct engaged little or no attention ; our depravity excited no pity ; our profane and rude manners made us shunned by one part of the community and despised by another."

But our insensibility to their claims has not discharged us from the debt we owe them. While we have been slumbering, our arrears of duty have gone on hourly increasing. While we have been slumbering, they have been perishing. From the shores of eternity they cast back on us looks of upbraiding and reproach, because we never stretched out a friendly hand to save them from destruction ; and because, while every other class was enjoying the benefit of our Christian solicitude, we entirely neglected *them*. From eternity they implore us instantly to warn their brethren and children, lest they also come to the place of torment. And shall we not acknowledge the force of the appeal ? The present generation of seamen is inheriting all the fatal consequences of our guilty neglect of the past,—shall we not hasten to repair, as far as present diligence can be regarded as a reparation for past neglect, our fatal negligence of former generations, by instant and earnest endeavours for the present ?

5. In estimating the claims of sailors on our benevolent regard, it is important to bear in mind their peculiar perils. " They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters ; these see the works of the Lord,

and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heavens, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end." In connexion with this vivid description of mariners in a storm, the readers of Scripture will think of Jonah when, coasting the Mediterranean to Tarshish, "the sea wrought, and was tempestuous:" and of a greater than Jonah when, crossing the Galilean sea with his disciples, "behold, there arose a great tempest on the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves:" and of the great apostle of the Gentiles, with his companions, wrecked in the Adriatic gulf, and escaping, "some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship." And how many a mariner can actually adopt the language of the same apostle, and say, "twice have I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep."

At sea, every thing that breaks the monotony of the surrounding expanse attracts attention. "One day," says Washington Irving, describing his voyage across the Atlantic, "we descried some shapeless object drifting at a distance. It proved to be the mast of a ship that must have been completely wrecked; for there were the remains of handkerchiefs, by which some of the crew had fastened themselves to this spar to prevent their being washed off by the waves.

There was no trace by which the name of the ship could be ascertained. The wreck had evidently drifted about for many months ; clusters of shell-fish had fastened about it, and long sea-weeds flaunted at its sides. But where, thought I, is the crew ? Their struggle has long been over—they have gone down amidst the roar of the tempest—their bones lie whitening among the caverns of the deep. Silence, oblivion, like the waves, have closed over them, and no one can tell the story of their end. What sighs have been wafted after that ship ! what prayers offered up at the deserted fireside at home ! How often has the betrothed, the wife, the mother, pored over the daily news, to catch some casual intelligence of this rover of the deep ! How has expectation darkened into anxiety—anxiety into dread—and dread into despair ! Alas, not one memento shall ever return for love to cherish. All that shall ever be known is, that she sailed from her port, ‘ and was never heard of more.’ ”

When the wind is howling around our comfortable habitations,—that “ it must be a dreadful time at sea,” are “ familiar household words.” And when gales of days’ or weeks’ continuance rage round our coasts, we say that “ we must expect to hear of wrecks.” No sooner, however, does the storm subside, than the subject is dismissed. Or, if a few of lively sympathy go the length of congratulating the mariner, in thought, on the returning calm, how small the

number of those who attempt to follow the drowned, in thought, into eternity!

How affecting, how appalling the statement, that "for every sixteen sailors who die of all diseases, eleven die by drowning, or in wrecks."*

It appears by a report of a Committee of Parliament on the extent of loss in property and lives at sea, that between 1833 and 1835 inclusive, there were 1573 vessels stranded or wrecked, and during the same period, there were 129 vessels missing or lost, making a total of 1702 vessels wrecked, and missing in the period of three years. The amount of property, in those vessels was believed to be £8,510,000 while 2682 lives were lost at the same time.

On our own coast it appears by the Sailor's Magazine for January 1837, that 316 vessels and 826 lives were lost in 1836. Now, estimate the value of each vessel and cargo at 20,000 dollars, we have the amount of 6,320,000 dollars lost the last year by shipwrecks.

Well, indeed, might an ancient philosopher inquire, when distributing the human race into the two classes of the living and the dead, "who

* Such is the result of a careful calculation over a space of ten years, by Mr. H. Woodroffe, Secretary of the Seamen's Society, South Shields; "but," he adds, "during the last four years, ending March last, on looking over the books, and taking the account of seamen of the port, they are as 17 to 16 of all other cases; and the cholera has been raging heavily." This, however, is a special case; and applies in all its extent only to the port of Tyne.

can determine in which class we are to enter the names of those on the sea?" At this moment, perhaps, while the reader is quietly perusing these lines, the sea, in some parts, is lashed into fury. Deep is calling unto deep. A vessel is staggering and plunging from the mountain waves down into the roaring caverns. Death is raging around it, seeking for his prey. A moment longer—a nail starts, a seam yawns, the masts plunge over the side—he enters, and the vessel disappears. So literally and emphatically true is it of the seaman, that there is but a step between him and death!

And should not a consideration of the more than ordinary perils of a sailor's life, impel us to do something more than ordinary for his salvation? When one who is in earnest to save his fellow-men from perdition, deems it necessary to explain or defend his earnestness, he points to the brevity and uncertainty of human life. By adverting to the solemn fact that the objects of his solicitude will soon have passed beyond the reach of his instrumentality, he feels that he has sufficiently justified his zeal, and established the duty of doing whatsoever his hand findeth to do with all his might. But here is a whole class of our fellow-countrymen, in relation to whom the ordinary span of human life is contracted to little more than half. "The average life of seamen," said Nelson, "is, from hard service, finished at forty-five."* But how

* Southey's *Life of Nelson*; Family Library Edition, page 294.

much earlier is it finished if perils be reckoned as well as labours ! Short as the ordinary day of life is, here is a class of men whose sun goes down while it is yet day. Had we reason to believe that our own lives would only average this period, would not the command of our Lord, to "work while it is day," come on us, with greater emphasis and effect ? But if our period of usefulness be abridged, whether by the curtailment of our own lives, or of the lives of those whose salvation we seek, the practical effect should be the same—it should redouble our efforts for their salvation.

When the life of a criminal is about to be forfeited to the laws of his country, those who are anxious for his salvation cultivate the short remainder of his time with a zeal proportioned to its brevity. Here is a class of men whose every return to port is to be looked on only as a reprieve from destruction,—should not similar assiduity mark our conduct towards them ? Do we not seem, in our treatment of them, to have taken leave of common kindness, and of all the methods by which Christian benevolence usually regulates its proceedings ? Ordinary zeal would be insult here : the call for activity is extraordinary ; yet we have not evinced even common solicitude. Shall it be necessary for us to hear their dying shriek, to see them perishing before our eyes, before we extend to them a friendly hand ? Oh, let us imagine that we are saving men in a storm—that we see them sinking—rapidly disappearing in the raging

waves around us,—that a moment lost, is a soul lost—for ever!

Be it remembered also that the same perils which terminate the lives of our seamen *early*, terminate most of them *suddenly*. One of the kindest arrangements of Him who willeth not the death of a sinner, consists in the slow and regular steps with which death is made to approach. Since it is appointed unto all men once to die, and to come to the close of their mortal probation, it is a provision unspeakably gracious, that a period of slow and gradual decay should give friendly warning for days, and weeks, and, often, even months beforehand, that the coming of the Lord draweth near. Even the Christian owns its value, though, for years he may have been substantially prepared for the final change. From sudden death, he prays to be delivered, as from an evil. But, for the impenitent sinner, the provision we speak of is of infinite value. It severs him from his unholy associates and pursuits, calls him away from the objects which have hitherto diverted his attention from religion, shuts him up in the solitude and silence of a sick chamber, gives him an opportunity of taking an impartial survey of his past conduct and his future prospects, of receiving the visits of Christian friends, and of casting himself, though at the final hour, at the feet of hitherto insulted mercy. But here is a class of men, many of whom are deprived of the benefits of this merciful arrangement also. For them the probationary period is not only

shortened, but closed abruptly. Not only is their day of life unnaturally brief, but it has no lengthening warning shadows, no sober eve, no twilight hour, for reflection.

How affecting to think that the great majority of those who have perished at sea, were cut off suddenly in the prime of life. The earth is the grave of infantine weakness, of diseased emaciation, of worn-out age, but the ocean is the tomb of the young, the vigorous, the brave. While yet they were full of heart and hope, buoyant as the bark in which they had careered over the waves, the lightning smote them, or the boom struck them overboard ; they fell from aloft, or the resistless wave washed them from the deck ; the ship sprung a leak, or stranded, or struck ; the boat sunk, or the tempest gathered, burst, and overwhelmed them. "Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them, they sank like lead in the mighty waters." Under circumstances the most unfavourable for reflection or prayer, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," they passed into the presence of their Judge.

How affecting to anticipate the day when "the sea shall give up the dead which were in it ;" when—

"From out their watery beds, the Ocean's dead,
Renewed, shall, on the unstirring billows, stand,
From pole to pole, thick covering all the sea."

How appalling to reflect that of the countless hosts which the sea shall then surrender up—

more numerous than its waves—the great mass perished suddenly, “went down quick.” And, oh! what ground there is to fear that they died unprepared—died in anger with death—died, and “gave no sign,” but that of impenitence—died, and offered no prayer but that of horrid imprecations—died amidst noise and tumult hostile to salutary reflection! But who shall attempt to picture the awful scenes which will then ensue? And shall we wait till the sea give up its dead, before we awake to a sense of our responsibility? Shall we delay till we see them standing for judgment, before we begin to weigh their claims, or to consider the consequences of our guilty neglect? Shall the hosts of those who will then arise unprepared go on augmenting, and we make no combined effort to prevent it?

6. The religious privations of sailors entitle them to a large share of our Christian solicitude. Their privations, even of a domestic and social kind, are such as to distinguish them from all other classes of society, and to excite the wonder and sympathy of numbers. But what are these when compared with the loss of religious advantages! And yet of these advantages the sailor is almost entirely deprived!

“The Sabbath was made for man.” It was graciously appointed by Him who knows the constitution and necessities of our nature. And who that marks the humanizing and ennobling moral influence which the stated observance of the Sabbath exerts, even on those who only

outwardly regard it, does not admire the wisdom and goodness which appointed it? But of this wise and beneficent provision, the sailor is to a considerable degree deprived. Shall we not, then, study to repair the loss by every means which an ingenious and diligent Christian benevolence can supply? The Sabbath is spoken of by God as his crowning gift to a people,—“moreover, also, I gave them Sabbaths,”—for the nation which has no Sabbath will soon have no religion. But to the maritime part of a nation this distinguishing gift of God is comparatively lost. The very nature of their calling, to a certain extent, precludes them from enjoying it. Shall we not attempt to meet their special exigency by a special provision? The ordinances of religion are spoken of by God, and frequently promised, as marks of his peculiar love to a people: for he has not only hallowed the Sabbath, but *blessed* it—made it a day of special grace. This is why the Christian would rather be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord, than dwell in the tents of wickedness. But here is a class whose occupation removes and exiles them from the ordinary privileges of public devotion—takes them without, and away from, the pale of stated congregational worship.

It is true, that where piety prevails, it will maintain its wonted communion with God,—like Paul in the storm, and on the verge of shipwreck, taking bread and giving thanks to God in the presence of all on board. And there is reason to believe, also, that where a disposition

to hallow the Sabbath exists in those who command, Sunday sailing would be found much less necessary than it is generally deemed ; and, when at sea, opportunities of joining, not only in the weekly, but even in the daily worship of God, might oftener be found than they now are. The "Retrospect" tells us of a commander of one of his Majesty's ships of war, who, though his vessel was very inferior in point of force and sailing, yet, through a winter, and in a climate far more severe than our own, was continually under way, chasing, cutting off, or boarding the enemy's vessels in shore, while our squadron of larger ships could do little more than lie off at anchor, and witness his almost incredible perseverance. But even this state of incessant activity and severe public duty did not prevent his performing morning and evening prayers every day ! And the records of our societies testify, that many of the Bethel captains, regarding their men and boys as their families, maintain the practice of *daily* worship on board.

But while such instances illustrate the power of superior piety in surmounting difficulties, they must be received as liable to many exceptions. For, besides that many of the opportunities for worshipping God at sea must be necessarily inferior to the quiet of the domestic altar and the stated ordinances of God's house, the best intentions on the part of the captain will often be frustrated by the winds and the waves. The sea is the aptest and most ancient emblem of uncertainty ; and every one that

places himself at its disposal must accommodate himself to its moods. To him, the Sabbath brings many of the duties of any other day. This is particularly the case in the merchants' service, where there are but few hands, and where all, at times, are laboriously employed, from the captain who commands to the seamen who obey. The sails must be reefed, or taken in; the ship must be steered, or, if needful, tacked; defects must be supplied, and disasters repaired as soon as they occur; while a gale may keep all hands on the alert for days and nights together. While his friends on shore are listening to the still small voice of the gospel, the sailor "afar off upon the sea," may be deafened by the hoarse voice of the tempest, and the roar of the storm; and that which to them is a day of rest, may be to him a day of toil, and peril, and wrestling with death. And one of the consequences of this uncertainty and irregularity is, that the Sabbath comes either to be totally neglected; or, if not quite undistinguishable from the other days of the week, what is still worse—its only distinction, at sea, consists in attending to personal cleanliness; in foreign ports, it is devoted to recreation and license on shore; and at home, as may be easily seen in any of our sea-ports and fishing-towns, it is spent in greater excesses of intemperance and profanity.

Here then is a class whose religious privations are such that a person, judging hastily and from appearances, might almost be tempted

to think that the God of mercy, in providing the means of grace for others, had disregarded and passed *them* by. The Sabbath which he has given to others, is but seldom enjoyed by them. The ordinances of public worship which he has instituted for the general good, shed little of their sacred influence upon them. Could the person bring himself to believe in the pre-existence of the soul, he might almost imagine that they belonged to a class which, for some unparalleled guilt in a former life, were doomed to be excepted from the ordinary provisions of mercy in this life. But the privations under which they are labouring are partly voluntary, and partly involuntary. By far the greater proportion, we have seen, is voluntary ; and of *that*, we must divide the guilt with them. The explanation relative to that which is involuntary is easy :—the ordinances of nature are older than the ordinances of grace, and were not meant to be controlled by them ; and the sailor, by placing himself almost entirely at the disposal of the former, is deprived of the full enjoyment of the latter. Now, if one of the great laws of nature relating to the supply of food had failed to a people for only a single season, and involved them in scarcity and famine, should we not hasten to their relief ? But here is a class to whom, owing to the peculiarity of their calling, the great ordinances of grace which supply the bread of life, come scantily and irregularly ; and this, not for a season merely, but for all time. Here is a class whose probabilities of salvation, humanly speak-

ing, are incomparably less, at present, than those of any other class of the community ;—and why ?—because their *opportunities*, their *means* of salvation are less, and God is a God of order who works by means.

In order to realize this distressing idea, let the reader of these lines imagine, if he be a parent, that his children are from this day to mingle with seamen, to pursue their calling, and to incur their religious privations—does he not feel as if the probabilities of their salvation would from this day be painfully diminished ? If he be a minister of the gospel of Christ, let him imagine that all the youths in his congregation are from this day to do business in great waters, and to follow the occupation of seamen ;—would he not feel as if his expectations concerning them were all but blasted ? and would not his parting address to them evince how much his fears were stronger than his hopes ?

To place our sailors, then, on a level with others in point of religious advantages, we must evidently employ extraordinary means. Indeed, recourse is obliged to be had to peculiar measures in order to put them as nearly as possible on a level with others in certain temporal respects. The land-mark must be reared, the lighthouse must be kindled, the life-boat must nightly be kept ready for launching, and all the various apparatus and methods which ingenuity and humanity have devised, (and still they are devising others,) must be placed and prepared for instant use ; while session after session the

legislature is employed in framing enactments and provisions to suit their peculiar case. And shall the Christian Church do nothing special to meet the exigency of their *spiritual* condition? Shall the life-boat be launched to snatch them from destruction? and shall *we* not point them to the ark of salvation from the second death? Shall the light-house be kindled? and shall *we* not be seen "holding forth the word of life"—the Pharos of a tempest-tossed and benighted world? Not only should we labor to remedy the grievous religious privations which at present they *voluntarily* endure,—by special provision made for their welfare while they are on shore, we should aim to compensate for their unavoidable privations at sea.

7. We have already glanced at the peculiar temptations of seamen; and what a touching and powerful claim on our sympathy arises from this ground. Profanity, intemperance, extravagance, and licentiousness, are their besetting sins. And, though they may be chargeable with these sins only in common with the depraved of other classes, *their* temptations to commit them are of a kind and a degree peculiar to themselves. The very restraints imposed on the indulgence of their passions while at sea, prepares them on their return to plunge into unusual depths of iniquity. The current of their depravity, which, if left to flow on unchecked and at will, might have exhibited nothing peculiar, acquires, by the temporary check, a fullness and a force, which, on resuming its

course, carries them far beyond the point of ordinary sin. During their absence, too, a check has been placed on their friendly and social feelings; they return to meet with companions and friends whom they love, and the occasion calls forth and justifies a flow of feeling, which but too often leads to carousal, and ends in excess. Their return to port, too, is not unfrequently felt by them to be an escape from imminent danger; and all that pleasurable excitement experienced on such occasions, and which if rightly directed would ascend in gratitude to God, too often expresses itself in extra carousals and boisterous mirth. They compliment their own skill and daring; "they sacrifice to their own net, and burn incense to their own drag," and only shout more loudly a bacchanalian song, which drowns the memory of the past, and madly defies the future. Let it be remembered, also, that the accumulated sums in which they receive their wages, give them the power of "running to an excess of riot." Multitudes of our artificers and workmen of various trades, on receiving only the wages of the week, cease to labor as long as a shilling remains: but the sailor receives an amount comparatively inexhaustible; and the consequence is that his improvidence and excesses are comparatively greater.

But that which constitutes the strength of all the temptations to which the sailor is exposed, is the notorious fact that they are all organized and plied with the force and certainty of an in-

fernal system. Let the reader peruse and ponder the following accounts of this dreadful system furnished by the late Mr. Walker, whose magisterial office, as we have already intimated, gave him an opportunity of watching the working of the plot. * “ There is no class of men who meet with such ill treatment from their fellow-creatures as sailors. After suffering the hardships of the sea, and toiling with unconquerable labor, they are beset on their return from each voyage by the most villanous and the most profligate of the species, for the purpose of robbing them of their hard-earned wages ; whilst those who should step forward to protect them, leave them to their fate, or even hold that they are capable of nothing better. When a vessel arrives from a long voyage, the crimps, or keepers of sailors’ lodging-houses, are on the alert to get as many of the crew into their power as possible. Boats are sent to fetch the men ashore, and the watermen receive a fee from each crimp for every sailor they can bring. The sailors leave the vessel, often I believe made half drunk, without money, and with nothing but their chest, upon which the crimps advance them money, till they receive their wages. Every temptation is put in their way to lead them to extravagance and recklessness. An exorbitant bill is made out, the amount of which is deducted from their wages, and they

* The statements of Messrs. Walker and Moors are substantially true of our own seaports.

are robbed or defrauded of the balance. As soon as they land, they are sponged upon by a set of idle fellows, who hang about the docks, pretending to be unable to get employment, or to have been old shipmates ; and they are plundered and imposed upon by the most profligate women. It is in a great measure a confederation against them, from which they have no chance of escape. Each party plays more or less into the other's hands. I have occasion to see frequent instances of these abominations, and in general they are so contrived, that there is no remedy or punishment. It frequently happens, that a sailor, who has sixty or seventy pounds to receive, will have, at the end of a few days, an enormous bill made out against him by a crimp, for what he and his hangers on are alleged to have consumed, and for money advanced to supply his extravagance in his freaks of intoxication. For his balance there is an eager contest among the harpies who surround him, which leads them sometimes to the most barefaced and scandalous practices.....In the lowest of the sailor's public-houses, there are, at the back, what are called long-rooms, the walls of which are painted with ships or other devices : and here are to be witnessed at almost all hours, but principally at night, scenes of the greatest villany and debasement. Sailors who are entrapped into these long-rooms, or similar places, are kept in a constant state of reckless excitement, and they never think of returning to sea, till they have got rid of all

their wages ; indeed, I believe, they are not unfrequently glad when their means are gone, as the only chance they have of escaping from the fangs of those who surround them."

In corroboration of this affecting statement, the writer would add the following paragraph, from Mr. Mark Moore's "Evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons, on drunkenness," in 1834 :—"For more than three years I was connected with a Society established for the improvement both of the morals and the temporal condition of sailors, and in that capacity I had an opportunity of seeing not only a great deal of sailors, but also of their places of resort, at the east end of London. I have visited, for that purpose, most of the public houses in that part of the metropolis, and I suppose there are not less than twenty of those houses, where, at the back of the gin-shops, there are what are called 'long-rooms;' those long-rooms will contain from 100 to 300 persons; and every evening, almost, all those rooms are full of sailors and girls of the town, and a class of men, principally Jews, called *Crimps*; and it is truly distressing to see the demoralization not only of the sailors, but also of the other individuals who frequent those disgraceful places. Some of these houses, I am sorry to say, are kept open at all hours during the night. I have been into those 'long-rooms' at ten and eleven o'clock at night; and the whole company, perhaps 200 or 300 persons, have been drinking and dancing, till the poor

fellows are in a most dreadful state. It is a very common practice for the girls to get various articles, such as laudanum and other drugs, put into the liquor of the sailors, who thus become completely intoxicated: they are then easily prevailed upon to accompany them to their lodgings; and they soon sink into a state of total stupefaction: they are then robbed of every penny they possess, and very often of their new clothes; and, when they awake, an old jacket and an old pair of trowsers are all the articles left to them. I have known instances of men being thus robbed of 30*l.*, 40*l.*, or 50*l.*, at a time." What a complication of temptation, debasement, and helplessness!

But let us trace the working of the system a step farther, and we shall find that the despoilers of these helpless victims often become their accusers. "It is a subject that comes particularly home to me," says Mr. Walker, "because I have had occasion so often to become acquainted, in my magisterial capacity, with the dreadful impositions, robberies, and profligacy, which are consequent upon the arrival of any number of vessels from distant parts of the globe; and, from the arts that are practised against sailors by gangs of confederates, in decoying, and stupifying them with liquor and with drugs, it is generally quite impossible to fix any proof of guilt. In fact, they are almost helplessly exposed to every combination of villany, and whether they are the accusers or the accused, they are almost equally objects of pity,

I have known instances of sailors being robbed of fifty pounds or upwards, the very day they received it; but having been first rendered senseless, detection is impossible. Sometimes, the day following their coming ashore, or even the same day, they are themselves brought for drunkenness and disorder, the consequence of conspiracy against them; and when remonstrated with on their imprudence, they will pathetically lament their helpless situation."

Now what can result from such a state of things operating on minds already vicious—what, but a rapid growth of depravity, tormenting remorse, self-abandonment, and recklessness in guilt, which shall prepare them, in turn, to become the tempters and the destroyers of others! But are we not responsible for the continuance of this system of iniquity? To the full amount to which, under God, it is in our power to correct the evil, unquestionably we are. And, be it remembered, that every moment we delay to take the necessary steps, the evil goes on increasing in vigor, and extending its operations.

In confirmation of this statement, the public papers report that a series of scandalous frauds have lately been brought to light in Doctors' Commons. They have been effected by parties who have taken out letters of administration, and made oath of their being next of kin, or only surviving relatives, of seamen who have died at sea, and thus obtained the wages due to them at their decease. The fraudulent parties

have consisted chiefly of Jew crimps, swearing that they are brothers of the deceased seamen ; or else, in concert with women pretending to be the wives of the deceased. This solitary fact would be sufficient to give us an idea of the organized nature of the system in operation against seamen ; of the wide ramifications of that system ; of the daring and determined character of those who work the system, and follow it as their ordinary calling ; and who, not content with ruining the sailor in life, follow and persecute him after death in the person of his poor and suffering relatives. It may give us also an idea of the utter helplessness of the sailor in the hands of such a class, when even his legal protectors themselves can be thus deceived and over-reached by them. Like the flying fish, which escapes from the *albacore* in its native element, only to be pounced on by the *man-of-war bird* waiting to devour it, the sailor no sooner escapes the perils of the deep, than he is the object of instant attack from those who live by preying and feasting on his misery, on shore. On coming to anchor, he exhibits the spectacle of a helpless victim, bound hand and foot, and passed from the ship to the crimp, from the crimp to the long-room, from the long-room to the brothel, and from the brothel to a ship again—watched and guarded at every stage, and his fetters unrelaxed—glad to escape, though with injured health, and the loss of all his earnings, to take refuge amidst the perils of the sea from the greater perils of the land.

8. The neglected and debased condition of our seamen renders them the means of immense evil to others, both at home and abroad. Its pernicious effects do not terminate with themselves. Ship owners suffer, and the maritime interest generally. How many vessels have been lost, how many valuable cargoes sunk, through the one sin of drunkenness alone! "Society at large," observes Mr. Walker, "is much interested, from selfish motives, as well as from motives of humanity, in shutting up the fertile field which the improvidence of sailors offers to vice and crime. And even a regard for the profligates and criminals themselves should induce an effort to remove temptation out of their way." "It is a matter of great consequence also to the rest of society on its own account, because the harvest which the present state of seafaring men affords to the vicious and the criminal, is one great cause of so many depredators, who prey at other times upon the various classes of the public. . . . It is to be observed that the immense quantity of crime and pauperism that springs directly and indirectly from the present want of moral cultivation among sailors, is to be paid for by the public in addition to their wages. . . . If any laborer by his improvidence becomes a pauper, or causes any of those who ought to be dependent on him to become paupers, the expense of that pauperism is to be added to his wages, to make up the whole cost of his labor; and, in the same manner, if he is guilty of crime, or tempts others to be

guilty, the expense incident to that crime is likewise to be reckoned part of the cost of his labor, though it is not paid by his employers, but by the public."

From this representation, then, it is evident, that the merchant, the political economist, the statesman, and the patriot, are alike called on to remedy the evils we deprecate, and are all interested in the success of their measures. But the Christian philanthropist, without undervaluing these considerations, will look above and beyond them all to the moral effects of these evils. Here, he will say, is a large class of men who cannot be ruined themselves, without instrumentally injuring and ruining multitudes of others. The interest and energy peculiar to their character, invest them with considerable influence over those with whom they associate; and, if that influence be evil, the injury must be immense. Many of them have families. "The ignorant, ungodly seaman's house is the habitation of extravagance and want, of riot and wretchedness, of misery and sin. He returns to it after a successful voyage, only to expend his hard-earned wages in excess and irreligion; and he leaves it again in hunger, in wretchedness, and in rags."* Whether the supposition be true, that that dreadful scourge the cholera, pursued the course of rivers, and the outline of the coast, or not, here, at least, is a moral epidemic, a thousand-

* *The Ocean.*

fold more fatal, pursuing this identical track, diffusing infection wherever it comes, and raging with a virulence which sweeps off almost all before it. But, unlike those who attempted in vain the removal of that malady, we possess a grand specific for the disease which we deplore. Shall we delay to administer it? "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?"

But the Christian philanthropist will remember that the evil does not terminate at home. Our sailors carry the moral contagion abroad. A traveller in Egypt relates with astonishment, that he met with natives of that country who could utter the most awful oaths in the English language, although they knew no other words in our tongue. His inquiries soon elicited the information, that they had learnt thus to swear from our sailors. Truly might they say,—

"You taught us language; and our profit is,—
We know how to curse!—"

It is well known that the blasphemies of our sailors became a by-word and a proverb, and the oath they most commonly swore, the nickname by which they were called.

"In a striking instance mentioned to me,* by one of our arctic adventurers, such was the pernicious effect of the ill behaviour of a body

* Discourses to Seamen; by the Rev. W. Scoresby, Chaplain of the Mariners' Church, Liverpool, &c.

of our countrymen in a remote district of North America, that disgrace had been entailed both upon the nation to which they belonged, and the religion which they professed. Such irreparable injury had they done to their character in their dealings with the natives, that were the Indians of that district called upon to describe, by a single word, the character of a man in all respects false, dishonest, and base, they would designate him by the name of *a Christian!*"

The greatest obstacles to the success of many of our missionary efforts abroad, have hitherto arisen from the depraved and atrocious conduct of British and American seamen. At the last anniversary of the British and Foreign Sailors' Society, the Rev. Mr. Williams, a missionary from the South Sea Islands, declared the dreadful effects produced on the minds and manners of the natives by the profligacy and cruelty of seamen, and deplored the visits of many of them as a source of demoralization to the heathen part of the population, and of fear to those who are converted.

Evidence to the same effect might be furnished in abundance from the records of our various missionary societies. In the Church Missionary Register, a letter from Capt. W. Jacob, of the East India Company's service, refers to a battle fought between some native tribes in the "Bay of Islands," in Feb. 1830, "which arose out of a dispute between two of the wretched objects who had been welcomed on board the — by her commander. These

transactions owe their origin entirely to that improper intercourse which it is lamentable to find is too generally allowed between the most degraded portion of the native population and the shipping, to the scandal of our country in that part of the world. There is much to discourage missionary efforts in the scenes of immorality and vice which are constantly exhibited, through the intercourse subsisting between the islands and the shipping, and the dissolute habits of many of the inhabitants which that intercourse has engendered. While we were solemnizing Divine service at Korosarika, we were much concerned to find that, within hearing and within sight of our congregation, two boats full of Europeans from the whalers in the bay, were rioting in a state of brutal intoxication, to the disgrace of their country. These are among the numerous hindrances which at present exist to any extensive reception of Christianity among the people."

The Rev. W. O. Croggon, Wesleyan missionary at Zante, in a letter dated May 8, 1833, remarks, "the state of British sailors abroad is shocking beyond description. It grieves one to the heart to behold them so given up to intoxication." An appeal from the London Missionary Society, Dec. 16, 1833, alluding to "the baneful influence of seamen on foreign missions," remarks, "Our brethren state that the besetting sin in Tahiti at present is drunkenness; that it has produced the greatest mischief in the churches; and this state of things,

which fills the directors with the greatest distress, is attributed greatly to American and British sailors, who have established a number of grog-shops on shore, for the purpose of retailing spirits, and who have induced the chiefs to become traffickers in rum."

The history of their conduct at Lahaina alone, one of the Sandwich group of islands, would be sufficient to brand their character with lasting disgrace. Often have they sent armed boats on shore there for the most licentious purposes, and have even carried away many of the native women from the island. And more than once, they have thus landed with the sworn determination of firing the missionaries' houses, and taking their lives, on account of the restraints which, through missionary influence, had been laid on their licentious practices. And, doubtless, had they not been prevented by the natives, who armed in multitudes to protect their religious teachers, they would have carried their murderous threats into effect. But what a deep reproach to America does this scene exhibit,—a people, just emerging from the most barbarous heathenism, "defending with their lives the ministers of Christ, whilst Americans, shameless Americans, panted to wade through their blood to gratify their sinful passions!"

The unbridled licentiousness of our seamen is written in many places in characters which will not soon be effaced—in deep, dreadful traces of *disease*. Odious maladies—the brand-

marks of unhallowed passions—once unknown to the poor islanders of the Pacific and the Southern Oceans, painfully attest that the British and American sailor has been there. But among the numerous and distressing illustrations which might be furnished of the depraved conduct of our sailors abroad, the following, supplied by a captain commanding one of the Hon. East India Company's ships, strikes the writer as most affecting :*—"When I was lying at —, in the East Indies, with seven or eight sail of East India ships in company, most of the men in the fleet were following their own corrupt inclinations (i. e. on the Sabbath day) on shore. And it is painful to relate, that so depraved, and so extremely wicked were their manners, that it even affected the feelings of the heathen natives ; so much so, that the idolatrous priests, and others associated with those chiefs in their worship, used every means in their power to prevail on those *Christian* sailors to embrace their religion ; and it appeared they had no other motive than that of making them better men."

Well, indeed, might the language of the prophet to rebellious Israel be addressed to multitudes of our sailors, *Ye have been a curse among the heathen*. What a powerful counteracting effect must their evil influence exercise on missionary labor ! Whether they go before the

* Related by Mr. Timpson in his, "What have I to do with Sailors?" page 18, 19 ; an excellent manual, especially for young persons.

missionary, and pre-occupy the ground with thorns, or come after him, and sow tares among the wheat; whether they influence the natives by simply inoculating them with the virus of their own depravity, or prejudice their minds against the English character and the Christian name by acts of cruelty and oppression, the effects must be alike injurious to missionary success. Like the South American chief in the early days of Spanish conquest, when the priest travelled in the rear of the advancing army to baptize the captive converts, the heathen natives can but little desire to go to the heaven which the English missionary proclaims, if the English sailor is to be there also. By our concern then for the success of the gospel in foreign lands, we are bound to ameliorate the character of our seamen. There is a sense, too, in which they themselves are to be regarded as missionaries. Yes, whether we will or not, they are missionaries. The world has its missionaries as well as the church, and these are they. And until they are rendered missionaries of good, they will continue to act as missionaries of evil; and will operate far more extensively in ruining the souls of men, than the missionaries of the gospel do in saving them.

But if they now form a mighty agency of evil, they might become a powerful agency of good. If our apathy and neglect do not forbid, the language of the prophet to Israel may be confidently applied to them, "It shall come to pass


that as ye were a curse among the heathen, so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing."

9. There are many elements in their character, which, when baptized and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, contain the promise of eminent *piety*. May we not warrantably suppose, that this was one reason why the Saviour of the world devoted so much of his ministry to the maritime part of the Jewish population? Capernaum, on the sea of Tiberias, was his adopted town. It was on the "sea coast" that he commenced, and principally pursued his ministry. There, the greater proportion of "his mighty works were performed." His largest audiences were composed of the inhabitants of the sea coasts; he found the greatest number of disciples there; and there his cause most illustriously triumphed.

The character of the class is substantially the same still. They are capable of quick and abiding impressions; full of grateful and generous affections; with a superstitious but strong belief in a superintending Providence; a deep veneration for signs, and omens, and old observances; a feeling of intense interest in tales relating to the invisible world, and to the appearance of spiritual beings. This must be evident to any one who knows any thing of the marvellous stories of the fair weather middle watch; and the very figure at the bow—derived from the ancient *tutela*, or chosen patron of the ship, to which prayers and sacrifices were daily offered, and which was held so sacred as to

offer a sanctuary to those who fled to it—even this figure, considering the deep feelings with which it is generally regarded, indicates the existence of a state of mind, the very reverse of a selfish, cold, heartless scepticism. Here, then, are elements of the most improveable nature; a deep substratum of rich and warm feeling, such as we may suppose the apostle Paul would have delighted to work in; and which, by whomsoever it may be wrought in earnestness and faith, could not fail, under the Divine blessing, to issue in a character of simple, glowing, and vigorous piety.

Other characteristics mark them out for eminent *usefulness*. And might not our Lord have been influenced, in the selection of his disciples, by a regard to these qualities? Peter and Andrew, James and John—a third part of his disciples—were called from their ships to follow him; Matthew was called from the quay of Capernaum; and it would appear, from the account of a scene subsequent to the resurrection of Christ, John xxi. 1—3, that “Thomas and Nathaniel, . . . and two other of his disciples,” were not strangers to the work of “casting a net into the sea;” and even St. Paul himself was a native and citizen of a maritime city. He knew that their apostolic duties would subject them to privations, require courage, and call them to sail to distant places to become “fishers of men.” For this, their daily employment had prepared them; rendering them hardy, laborious, and bold. And, accordingly, after



his ascension, we find them voluntarily incurring the greatest dangers, patiently enduring the greatest toils, and compassing sea and land, to achieve the noblest objects.

The same intrepidity, ardor, and devotedness to the cause they espouse, distinguish our seamen as a class; these are the qualities which have made them useful to their country; and the same characteristics which have rendered them so eminently serviceable to the cause of America, need only be sanctified and rightly directed, in order to be equally useful in the cause of God. Happy day for our country, when her maritime population "shall be holiness to the Lord!" Then, her sailors shall return, not to "riot in chambering and wantonness," but to tell of "the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep;" they "shall visit their habitation, and shall not sin." Their arrival on shore shall furnish occasion for grateful praise, and their departure to sea shall call forth prayers and devout commendations to God. The very qualities which now make them to be feared and shunned, shall then excite affection and esteem; for they shall coast our shores, and sail from port to port, as the agents of Christian benevolence, freighted with the blessings of the gospel of peace.

And does not their *calling* mark them out for extensive usefulness, as well as their character? In a literal sense, their "field is the world." They are citizens of the world. They are the missionaries of commerce to the ends of

the earth ; and, whether the church of God avail itself of their agency or not, to the ends of the earth they will continue to go ;—what an instrumentality is here ! what a magnificent agency for good ! And shall it remain comparatively unemployed ? Is there not ground to believe that one of the reasons why Britain has been allowed to possess the commerce of the world is that she might possess the necessary facilities for the evangelization of the world ? Is it not remarkable that the three nations in which reformed Christianity chiefly prevails,—England, America, and Holland,—should be the three most commercial nations ?—and must not the obvious design of Providence in this marked arrangement force itself on every reflecting Christian mind ? Had England and America acted in accordance with this design ; had we duly regarded the welfare of our sailors, and trained them up in the fear of the Lord, how different an aspect might the world, at this moment, have presented ! How much, for instance, might we have done for China by this time, by the mere distribution of tracts, had our sailors been men “ valiant for the truth : ” whereas those very sailors themselves are there perishing for lack of knowledge ; and an affecting appeal has just been made to the Christians of these United States in their behalf, by a missionary just entered into rest.*

* Rev. E. Stevens, American Seamen’s Chaplain at Whampoa, China ; in an *Appeal to the Friends of Seamen*.

Our sailors may yet be a blessing to the ends of the earth. Not only might they be restrained from being a hindrance to the missionary's efforts abroad, they might become his active and powerful auxiliaries. The ancient Jews were denominated *God's witnesses*,—to give evidence to the world in his behalf; Christians are called *the epistles of Christ*, and are said to be known and read of all men. Pious sailors would eminently realize this purpose. If unable to be *witnesses*—to proclaim the gospel with their lips, they would yet be *epistles*—speaking to the eye by the silent eloquence of a holy useful life. And this is a language which needs no translation, no interpreter; men of every tongue can understand it; it is the only true universal language. In some instances, indeed, our sailors already answer this purpose; “the Christian natives in the South Sea Islands are delighted with the arrival of a *praying ship*, or a *believing ship*.” Seamen might often precede our missionaries, and prepare the way for them. By the distribution of bibles and tracts, and by the thousand methods which a holy ingenuity will devise, they might virtually take possession of a heathen land in the name of him who is King of kings and Lord of lords, as they do of a newly discovered land in the name of their earthly sovereign. They might become the pioneers, or the agents, of the Christian church in every land.

How interesting the spectacle of a cloud of shipping in one of our mercantile ports, avail-

ing themselves of the same tide, and spreading their sails to the same auspicious breeze, to depart on their respective voyages ! For a short time, they all proceed down channel together ; but as “ the great and wide sea ” expands before them, they strike off in all directions, and every day they diverge wider and farther from each other, till eventually they are scattered over the face of the world. “ There go the ships ! ”—said the psalmist, when contemplating the sublime spectacle, and filling his mind with great thoughts of nature and providence. And will not the church sanctify that sublimity, and behold in the navigated sea a glorious agency of grace ? “ There go the ships ! ” the Christian might say, as he stood and gazed at a numerous fleet diverging and disappearing in the distant horizon ;—*there go the ships*, laden with treasures more precious than those of the navy of Solomon when freighted with the ivory and the gold of Ophir ; in one of them are tracts ; in another, bibles ; in another, missionaries ; in all of them, men, who, like the Christian mariners of the Galilean Lake, are “ the messengers of the churches and the glory of Christ,”—men of simple, earnest, glowing piety, who go to be “ fishers of men,” in all nations, kindreds, and climes on the face of the earth. The prayers of the church waft them on their several ways : angels convoy them ; He who brought the ship of the disciples safe to land is present with them ; and the very ends of the earth shall be glad for them.

10. The example of our Divine Master points our attention to sailors, with all the force of an express command. His marked and devoted attention to the maritime districts of Palestine, had been the subject of early prophecy, Isaiah ix. 1, and when the prediction was fulfilled, it was made the subject of evangelic history, Matt. iv. 13—16. "Leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephtalim: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon and the land of Nephtalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: the people who sat in darkness saw great light; and to them who sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up." We have already seen that, in fulfilment of this prophecy, our Lord commenced, and principally pursued, his ministry on the sea-coasts. There he performed his greatest miracles, found his largest audiences, and called most of his apostles. Though Bethlehem was his birth-place; Nazareth, the residence of Joseph and Mary; and Jerusalem, the metropolis of the land; yet Capernaum, a sea-port,* was his adopted, "his own city." The synagogue was the appointed

* The inhabitants of Palestine in the vicinity of the Lake still call it by its ancient and scriptural name, *the sea*. In conformity with this usage, Capernaum is sometimes spoken of as a *sea-port*; though, perhaps, the more appropriate appellation would be a *fishing town*.

place for religious instruction, but he went to the beach to proclaim the kingdom of God. The beach was crowded, for "the people pressed on him to hear the word of God," "so he went into a ship and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables." Here we see the Saviour having recourse to extraordinary methods for the good of the maritime class; and has he not in this, as in every other respect, left us an example that we should walk in his steps? Shall he walk forth to the sea-side, as if he would show us the way to this destitute class, and shall we leave him to walk there alone, while we sit still in the house? Shall he consecrate the quay, the strand, the deck of the ship, by his sacred presence, and personal activity, and shall not we enter in and endeavor to fill these spheres of usefulness, in his name, and to his glory?

11. But the motives which should urge us to cultivate the improvement of our seamen are endless. *Ordinary consistency requires it.* We are concerned for the welfare of every other class of our countrymen; we are sending the gospel to the people of every other land; shall the men to whom we must be indebted for conveying it, be the only class comparatively disregarded? *And the voice of prophecy calls for and encourages it:* for "the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee. . . . Surely, the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their

silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God." And even "the merchandise of Tyre shall be holiness to the Lord." Every description of maritime agency shall be consecrated and made subservient to the universal extension of the Divine empire.

ZEBULON.

PART THE THIRD.



PART THE THIRD.

THE MEANS BY WHICH THE CONDITION OF OUR SEAMEN MIGHT BE IMPROVED.

HAVING sketched “the present condition of our seafaring population;” and enforced “the duty of the public in general, and of all Christians in particular, to promote their moral and religious improvement;” it now remains that the writer should specify what he considers “the best means by which this object may be accomplished.”

It is a distinguishing feature of Christian benevolence, that, while it aims chiefly at the highest good of man, it bestows a proportionate regard on all his inferior interests; resembling, in this respect, its Divine Exemplar, who, in his way to the cross to save a world, often stood still to heal the diseased and relieve the wretched. And so closely are the temporal and spiritual welfare of mankind united in principle and in fact, that whichever we begin with first, we are certainly preparing the way for the other,

and should be provided with the means of seizing and promoting it as soon as it begins to appear. If we commence with his temporal welfare, and are the means of raising him out of a state of social debasement, to cleanliness, industry, and self-respect, we have, in effect, led him up the steps of the Christian temple, brought him to its very threshold, and, in the hope that he may be induced to enter, a place should be prepared and awaiting him within. If, on the other hand, we begin with his spiritual welfare, we cannot instrumentally succeed in restoring him to God, without, at the same time, restoring him to himself and to society, raising him in the scale of moral and social worth, converting his habits of idleness and improvidence into industry and economy; and thus proving that godliness is profitable for the life that now is, as well as for the life that is to come. And, in the prospect of his social improvement, we should be provided with helps and institutions for the aid and development of his new-found powers.

1. In devising liberal things for our seamen, then, let us begin with the lowest form of their exigency—a state of sickness. As it was the peculiar glory of Christ that he “took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses,” so the erection of hospitals and infirmaries for the indigent and helpless sick—a thing totally unknown to paganism—seems to have been reserved for the benevolence of his followers.

The writer is far from advocating that blind

and miscalculating charity, which, by rendering foresight on the part of the lower classes unnecessary, makes them improvident, and augments the evil which it was meant to relieve. But, in many instances, the earnings of the particular class in question are but barely sufficient for the sustenance of life on its lowest terms ; or, a want of employment has made saving impossible ; or, if actual extravagance has reduced the patient to indigence, we should remember that the improvidence of the class is, in a great measure, owing to our own culpable neglect ; and until the evils of that neglect be remedied, we should hold ourselves bound to provide for the consequences.

Perhaps, to no part of the sailor's wants has more efficient aid been rendered than to his wants in sickness. Still, however, it will remain to be considered, *first*, whether this provision is adequate ; *second*, whether these excellent charities afford sufficient facilities for the admission of the sick ; and, *third*, whether they secure a course of wholesome religious instruction. On the last of these particulars, the Christian philanthropist will naturally lay considerable stress ; remembering that it relates to a situation highly favourable to the reception of the gospel.

2. The next great desideratum is, the establishment of comfortable and respectable boarding-houses, in our maritime cities, for the reception of sailors immediately on landing. A few such already exist. But a vast number are

quite the reverse, and are the cause of great public detriment. It is very desirable that there should be some systematic provision for the protection of sailors, so as to give them a fair chance of becoming prudent, by having facilities afforded them for escaping bad company, and for placing in safety such part of their wages as they would not wish to spend." The moment of their landing from a voyage is often the crisis of their fate. Having no home, no refuge, open to receive them, and being quite indifferent as to the particular direction they take, they allow themselves to be led, like victims, to debasement and ruin. But were Benevolence as active in its movements, and as assiduous in its attentions, as Avarice and Temptation,—were it to prepare for them a home, and, cordially taking them by the hand, to lead them into it, how many a victim might be snatched from the jaws of destruction! And the expedient would soon support itself. Only let respectable persons establish such places; and let all the arrangements be made with as little sensible restraint, and as studied a conformity to the general habits and peculiar tastes of sailors as a sound morality will permit,—let this be done, and it would be a libel, not only on the class, but on common sense, to suppose that it would not succeed, and be productive of the happiest results on their morals.

3. "A public duty towards sailors will be left unperformed, so long as savings' banks are not opened in all our sea-ports for their exclu-

sive benefit." When the writer had mentally sketched a plan for the improvement of seamen, of which savings' banks formed a part, he was not a little gratified at unexpectedly meeting with the concurring testimony of Mr. Hutchinson, in favour of their adoption. This gentleman is actuary to the London Provident Institution. He informed me that he had some time since sketched the plan of a seaman's savings' bank and, at my desire he has furnished me with a few observations, which I shall make the ground-work of the following remarks, in many instances using his own words.

"Of all the plans devised for bettering the condition of the labouring classes, not one has so successfully promoted that object as the establishment of savings' banks. . . . The seamen frequenting our ports make little use of the savings' banks now existing, except those designed for their use. They are not in any particular manner brought to their notice. The rules and regulations have no particular relation to their peculiar exigencies and way of life. . . . It is a mistake to suppose that seamen are naturally more improvident than landmen; they are made so by the circumstance of receiving their wages in accumulated sums; and other men in the same rank of life, when exposed to the like temptation, seldom resist to a greater extent, except in so far as they are not equally beset with villany. . . . But this failing is not an incurable one, if all possible allurements and facilities were afforded to habits of saving. And

the sailor has then an advantage over all other classes of labourers, in that, whilst he is earning his wages, he has not only no temptation to waste them, but he has seldom the possibility. Once instil into a seaman a desire for accumulation, and it is easier to him than to any other individual ; he puts a lump in store, and on his return finds it not only safe, but increased. He has the means in his hands to double it. Is he not likely to apply them so, and to go to sea again as soon, and a better sailor, than the spendthrift ? A desire of saving having once taken root in a sailor's mind, it has more time and opportunity to grow there than under any other circumstances ; and as a certain similarity of habits must ever characterize the class, a partial change for the better would most probably lead to an universal one.

“ The establishment of a savings' bank in a central situation, and under rules and regulations having solely in view the habits and convenience of the class, would in all probability confer invaluable benefits upon them, if patronized and supported by the shipping interest. Here the produce of their labour might be safely housed until wanted for beneficial purposes, instead of being dissipated in profligacy and folly, or made a prey to others. What a benefit it would be to a sailor to have his wages placed in security, if only till, upon getting another ship, he might be enabled to purchase his outfit with his own money, instead of being driven to procure it on the most extortionate

terms! But if a permanent habit of saving could be produced, it would, by raising him in his own estimation, make him a more valuable servant, and eventually be productive of great national benefit. Experience has shown, that when a depositor in a savings' bank has succeeded in accumulating a few pounds, a most extraordinary stimulus is frequently given to the formation of habits of industry and economy, and every nerve appears to be strained to increase his fund. At the same time, the very bearing and manner of the individual is altered, and he seems to have acquired a proper feeling of self-respect, the spread of which must produce the most beneficial results to society at large. The American sailor has many noble qualities, which, as is often visible, make him the more keenly feel the debasement of some of his habits, and which would doubtless induce him to enter more willingly into any better course that might be opened to him. There seems to be no mode of offering him a better course, in principle so sound, or in operation so easy, as by the establishment of a savings' bank, having for its sole object the encouragement of provident habits among the seafaring class, by affording them every possible facility to place whatever part of their hard earnings they may have to spare, out of the reach of imposition and robbery, for their own benefit and for that of their families.

"The principal objects to be aimed at in such an institution would be, 1. To establish

it in the most central situation ; to have it open at the hours most suitable to the convenience of seafaring men ; and to have in attendance persons familiar with their habits and humours. 2. To afford every proper facility both in investing and withdrawing deposits ; so as to hold out the greatest inducement to invest, and at the same time to meet the sudden exigencies of sailors wanting money for their outfit, or any other necessary purpose. 3. To afford facilities for making provision for seamen's families during their absence at sea. 4. To receive the wages of sailors on their behalf from their employers. 5. When desired, to purchase annuities for seamen, and to invest their money in the funds when exceeding the amount allowed by law to be in the savings' bank. 6. To keep a register of depositors wanting ships, for the purpose of being referred to by ship-owners wanting steady men. 7. To provide for distributing savings, and receiving wages, in case of death. 8. To act in every way as the stewards and friends of the depositors. 9. To apply to the State Legislatures for whatever increased powers might be necessary to promote the above ends.

“ American seamen do not stand in need of charity, but justice ; and I hope to see their cause meet with the highest patronage, and the most extensive support, and I have no doubt it will be so, if once taken up by those competent to ensure its success. I should like to see a public meeting called by influential

men, and a subscription opened, for the purpose of carrying this object into effect. . . . It is, in my opinion, a very strong argument in favour of the establishment of a savings' bank for seamen on an efficient and extensive plan, that while it would powerfully contribute to rescue the improvident from the evils with which they are surrounded, it would at the same time afford facilities to the efforts of the well-conducted, especially in the beginning of their career, which under no other system could they so certainly enjoy. And it might lay the foundation of an entire change of habit in respect to prudence among the whole class of seamen. . . . My view of such an institution is, that after being well started, and complete in all its appointments, it should be made to pay its own expenses, and that it should not be artificially and precariously maintained by external aid. I would have a general superintendence by influential men, and all the rest matter of business. As I said before, American seamen do not want charity, but justice; and I should consider any effort now made in their behalf, only as the payment of a debt due to them for past ill-treatment and neglect."

4. In connexion with the savings' bank, a register should be kept of depositors wanting ships, for the purpose of being referred to by ship-owners wanting steady men. This suggestion, indeed, forms a part of the preceding plan. But it seems so important as to deserve

distinct consideration. For only let it once become generally known that the owners of ships consult this register for men, and the circumstance would operate as a powerful recommendation to seamen in favor of the savings' bank; while, on the other hand, their connexion with the bank would furnish a presumptive guarantee for the sobriety, providence, and general steadiness of its depositors. They would mutually recommend each other. And, what is best of all—a demand for character would be created and proclaimed, which could not fail to act beneficially on the whole class.

5. The establishment of Sailors' Temperance Societies is obvious and indispensable. That the promotion of temperance among seamen is *necessary*, we know, for intemperance is the sailor's besetting sin, and it is made by others the occasion of his robbery and ruin. That it is *practicable* is evident, for it has been tried with success in the majority of American ships.

But, in order that the effort may be made with the greatest likelihood of success, it seems desirable that Temperance Societies should be established for seamen *exclusively*. By this means, not only would the objection which the sailor feels to standing on the same footing with landmen in this particular, be successfully met; but he would feel that the Society was in a sense *his own*; and would also acquire the idea that the public takes a kind interest in his special welfare. The rules and regulations should be prepared directly with a view to their

habits and interests. And the tracts intended for circulation on the subject, should be expressly adapted and addressed to the seafaring class. What incalculable benefits might thus be conferred on this deserving section of the community!—and never should it be forgotten, that by benefitting any single class of society, the whole community reaps the advantage. What a fruitful source of guilt and misery would thus be dried up! for drunkenness is the most fertile parent of crime. How greatly would the security of maritime life and property be increased! * for drunkenness has occasioned many of the most fatal disasters at sea; so that, in this point of view, a Sailors' Temperance Society would be, in effect, a public safety society.

6. But if the sailor is to be kept from the public-house, a place must be provided where he can pleasantly and profitably spend his lei-

* What stronger proof can be afforded of this, than the remarkable fact that the different marine insurance companies in the city of New York have resolved that they will allow a deduction of five per cent. on the net premiums which may be taken after this date, on all vessels terminating their voyage without loss of life, provided the master and mate make affidavit, after the termination of the risk, that no ardent spirits had been drunk on board the vessel by the officers and crew during the voyage or term for which the vessel was insured! Shortly after this, the Baltimore Insurance Company, in the city of Baltimore, passed a similar resolution. The Virginia Marine Insurance Company at Richmond have adopted the same rule; and it is believed that several of the insurance companies in Boston have acted on a similar plan for some years.

sure instead. This might be advantageously done by the establishment of a Sailors' Institute. Why might there not be a Sailors', as well as a Mechanics' Institute; where popular instruction should be given on the many subjects connected with a seaman's occupation, and where he might lay in stores of useful knowledge for pleasure and benefit, whether at sea, or on shore? A sailor frequently remains many weeks in port; either, when paid off, he waits for another ship, or whilst the one to which he belongs clears out her cargo. During these weeks he has necessarily much leisure, and were he comfortably lodged, and his money at rest in a savings' bank, he might find instruction and profitable amusement at his Institute, and from a lending library that might be attached to it. He would, consequently, be less exposed to drunkenness and disease, and the knowledge gained would make him neither less useful nor less happy. Assuredly he would not feel less attached to the country which had shown so much interest in his comfort and welfare.

A naval museum would form a very natural appendage; this, besides furnishing the mind with amusement while on shore, might be the means of exciting a spirit of inquiry, creating a thirst for information, and awakening a desire to be the means of enriching the collection. Suitable persons should be appointed or permitted to lecture, and instruction in other forms be given, on "the many subjects connected

with a seaman's occupation ;" and the whole should be placed under a wise religious superintendence.

7. In connexion, either with the sailors' institute, or with the savings' bank, or with both, —for these two objects might be beneficially united together,—the writer would suggest the establishment of a society for the distribution of honorary rewards to steady and deserving seamen. It is well known that societies of this kind exist in many of our agricultural districts ; and, wherever they exist, they are, and must be, productive of good. Equal scope for their beneficial operation exists among our maritime population. Their claim to reward might be made to depend on the way in which (if married) they have supported and brought up their families ; the length of time they have gone in the same ships ; their sobriety, economy, regularity of attendance on the means of improvement on shore ; and on their general good behaviour on board. And their *claim* to reward, on these grounds, might be ascertained by a reference to the parochial register, to the list of the savings' bank depositors, of the temperance society's members, of the sailors' institute's members, and by the testimony of the captains with whom they have sailed, either oral, or by certificate.

8. Ascending into the higher region of *religious* improvement, the writer is constrained to admire the wisdom, the variety, and (considering the limited resources devoted to the object)

the extent of the means already in operation for the evangelization of our seamen. The Bible is distributed. Libraries, containing approved religious works, are lent to ships about to sail. Religious tracts are circulated. Sunday-schools exist for the religious instruction of sailors' children. Prayer-meetings are held at appointed stations on board, at which sailors are invited to attend. Domestic and foreign agencies are employed for the diffusion of these benefits to the greatest extent which existing resources allow. And—that which is the grand method of religious usefulness appointed by Christ himself for every creature under heaven,—and the great method which he himself pursued for benefiting the fishermen and sailors of Judea—the gospel is proclaimed. On this method, therefore, our hopes should rest as the principal mode of religiously benefiting the present generation of the sailors of our country.

Now all these means of religious usefulness so strongly commend themselves to every enlightened mind, that were either of them yet untried, it ought to be put into operation to-morrow. Our only regret concerning them is, that, owing to the want of pecuniary resources, the application of them, at present, should be so extremely limited. Whatever methods of usefulness we may be prepared to suggest in addition, we can only deplore that these means should be comparatively languishing for want of pecuniary support. Let us hope that when the public attention shall be duly called to the

condition and claims of our seamen, funds will be provided for carrying those means into effect, on a scale commensurate with their excellence, and with the crying need which exists for them.

9. In the hope, and with the full persuasion, that such will be the case, the writer would suggest the establishment of Normal Schools to qualify sailors for promoting the religious improvement of their shipmates on board. The chief recommendation of this plan in his own view is, that it promises to carry out the existing plans of religious usefulness, already referred to, into more efficacious effect. Why should the period of the sailor's improvement be stinted to the time of his continuance in port? especially, as the time which some ships are at sea, exceeds the time in which they are at anchor. And why should his improvement be left during this long period to the uncertainty of his taking a book from the loan library on board? Through the want of some such instrumentality as that suggested, it is to be feared that much incipient good, commenced on shore, is lost at sea; and that many a religious impression is as completely effaced between port and port, as the trace of his keel in the wave—impressions which only required a kind and watchful eye, to lead, through divine influence, to his permanent conversion to God.

In order to remedy this evil, and to carry out existing plans of improvement, the writer submits that a number of sailors whose piety, zeal, and general qualifications, render them eligible,

should receive such instruction as would be likely to render them religiously useful to their shipmates while at sea. Were such men provided, the probability is, that the respectability of their character and demeanor, would easily procure them berths ; especially on board such vessels as allow Bethel meetings to be held in them. In addition to which, it would be the duty of the Society which trained them, to interest itself, by recommendation and otherwise, in procuring them berths. It is likely, however, that when it became generally known that such a class of men existed, such recommendations would be quite unnecessary ; that they would be sought after as trustworthy and superior men ; and that many a ship-owner and captain would deem it their interest to procure and prefer them.

Without at all interfering with the ordinary duties of his station on board, an individual of this class should consider himself as the representative and servant of the Christian Society which had assisted to prepare him. In this capacity, it should devolve on him to carry on instruction in reading of any of the boys or men who had been learning on shore ; to seize every prudent opportunity for reading the Scriptures and religious books to such of the crew as were disposed to listen ; to read or offer up prayer, if allowed by the captain to do so ; to superintend and circulate the books of the loan library ; and, on arriving in provincial or foreign ports, to communicate immediately with the agents of

the Society stationed there, that no time might be lost in holding Bethel and other meetings on board. But the ways in which such a man might promote the objects of a religious society, exceed enumeration. Religious impressions received on shore, would, by his instrumentality, be saved from dissipation; and the crew would feel that, though absent from port, they were still in the presence of an agency expressly employed for their welfare; and the Society employing him would feel that though the objects of their solicitude were "afar off upon the sea," a man of God, and a servant of their own, was still with them. His character would necessarily invest him with influence both in the eyes of his captain and his shipmates; as far as that influence could be prudently exerted he would naturally employ it to obtain, as his companions on board, men like-minded with himself; thus he would obtain the means of holding occasional prayer-meetings at sea, and the ship be converted into a Christian church. Besides which, a powerful Christian agency would, in this way, be raised up and put into motion, from among the sailors themselves. And if the writer mistake not, the time is not far distant, when all our great religious societies which aim at the propagation of the gospel, will find, that the most speedy and effectual method of accomplishing their object is, to raise up an agency from among the nation or the class which they seek to benefit, and to employ that agency for the purpose. At all events, were such an agency

raised up from among the maritime class, the energy and zeal peculiar to the character of that body warrant the persuasion that, under God's blessing, the evangelization of the entire class would certainly follow.

10. In the mean time, the writer would urge the importance of seeing that each sailor, on his departure from port, be in possession of a copy of the word of God. Let the last question put to him be, "Have you a Bible?" And let the question be repeated every time he departs; for, though he may have had one formerly, he may not have it now. The question would have the effect, at least, of convincing the sailor of the great importance which the inquirer attached to his possessing that sacred treasure, and might thus be the means of recalling the Bible to his memory under circumstances the most favorable to the perusal and reception of its truths.

The ship *Argo*—says heathen mythology—was built of the oaks of the sacred groves of Dodona, which were endowed with the gift of prophecy. The consequence was, that the beams of the vessel gave forth oracles to the adventurous Argonauts, and saved them from many an approaching calamity. Give the Bible to the seaman, and the heathen fable will become Christian fact. From his cabin, his berth, his chest, his hammock, it will send forth its living oracles—warn him of dangers more fatal than those which attended the recovery of the

golden fleece, and cause him to hear "words whereby he may be saved."

11. Incalculable good would certainly result from the adoption of the preceding plans. But, while the writer would not allow a moment to be lost in carrying them into effect; while he feels that, were the seafaring class to end with the present generation of sailors, the Christian public could not possibly do enough to atone for its past neglect of them, even though it should begin with all these plans to-morrow; yet he confesses that his hopes are chiefly fixed on a new generation of that class. With this impression, he would urge immediate and especial attention to the religious education of sailors' children.

Infant schools, designed expressly for them, and conducted on Christian principles, deserve particular attention. These excellent institutions, by taking the little ones from scenes of negligence and disorder during the greater part of the day, and accustoming them from their earliest age to the superior comforts of cleanliness, order, and cheerful sobriety, would be the means of imparting, in numerous instances, a taste for the pleasures of morality and religion, never to be lost. And even where the amount of benefit fell short of this desirable point, a witness would be left in the bosom of all who had enjoyed the advantages of such schools, which would always be ready to give its testimony on the side of morality and religion. Other schools should be ready to receive them

from the hand of the Infant school ; to train them up in the fear of God, and in the knowledge necessary to their calling, till they went to sea ; and to assist them in procuring the situations necessary. The rising race of the maritime class would thus be secured, as by an embankment, against the overflowing depravity of the present generation, and a foundation be laid for a new class of seamen of a superior character.

12. The writer has but one plan more to propose ; and the object of that will be to carry the preceding plans into effect.

But before he proceeds to state it, he may be allowed to say a word concerning that which alone can entitle them to consideration—their practicability and suitableness.

In the outline we have sketched, we have received the sailor, in sickness, and conveyed him to a hospital, where his moral as well as his bodily malady shall receive the necessary attention. In health, we have received him from his ship, and led him direct to a comfortable and respectable boarding-house, provided expressly for his reception. We have placed his money in security ; where, instead of being “wasted in riotous living,” he has the comfort of knowing that it is safe, and increasing. We have encouraged him to add to his economy, temperance ; and, in order to diminish his temptation to intemperance, we have provided a place of resort where instruction and amusement are combined together. To foster in his

heart a sense of the value of character, we have placed before him honorary rewards for merit ; and have suggested a way by which superiority of character may lead to increased employment. While remaining in port, we have provided him with a rich variety of Christian instruction, and of the means of salvation ; at the moment of departure, we have put him in possession of a copy of God's own book ; and, for a companion on the deep, we have given him a man of God who will care for his religious welfare. And, in order that his children may prove a comfort to himself, and a blessing to society, we have proposed to take them in infancy, and train them up in the pleasant ways of wisdom and of the fear of the Lord. Thus beginning with his physical condition, we have ascended upwards through his moral, social, intellectual, and spiritual necessities, and have aimed to provide for them all. Following him through the entire round of his temptations and his wants, we have attended his course in sickness and health, at home and abroad, temporal and spiritual, and have endeavored to provide for the whole circle ; leaving him in the possession of his savings for the season of infirmity and age, and with the prospect of his children improving on their father.

But the plan we have sketched, besides being comprehensive, seems also simple and compact. All those parts of it which relate to the temporal and moral improvement of the sailor, arise so naturally out of each other, that they

may be advantageously united, and conducted together. And those which relate to his religious welfare are but ramifications of the same principle differently applied.

The plan proposed, too, has for its object, not simply the relief and assistance of the sailor : it aims to aid him in a way which shall enable him to aid himself, and lead to his personal improvement. By forming him to habits of economy and self cultivation, it aims to develop his own powers, and to raise him in the scale of social worth ; and by leading him to the means of grace, it aspires to complete his happiness, and to render him a religious blessing to others.

Nor may it be irrelevant to advert to the comparative inexpensiveness of the plan. The expenditure of the religious department, would depend, of course, on the extent of its operations ; but were the other parts of the plan to be fairly and fully carried into effect, there can be but little question, that, in a short time, they would be found capable of supporting themselves.

And then as to the question, whether or not sailors would avail themselves of those means of improvement, abundant evidence might be adduced to establish the affirmative. In the full proportion in which means have been employed for their welfare, they have succeeded. Our endeavors in this respect have been signally successful. The reports of our Temperance Societies testify that the use of spirituous liquors

in the navy is on the wane, and may be entirely subdued, while it is generally discontinued in the merchant service. In a letter addressed "To the Friends of Seamen in England," and dated Canton, Jan., 1836, an American missionary writes, "Intemperance, I trust, is beginning to give ground. Within the last two years more than 100 vessels have been here in which no spirits are given to the crews, and it is now a long time since I have seen a single American vessel which allows any ardent spirits to officers or people." The reports of the savings' banks at some of our maritime towns, exhibit symptoms of *economy* also in the seafaring class. Thus the number of depositors in the Seamen's Savings' Bank at New York in 1833 was 569, and the amount deposited was \$74,288,74. The whole number of depositors in that at Boston is 1720, of whom 566 are seamen. The number of depositors from August 1st 1836, to August 1st 1837, is 431, of whom 117 are seamen.

The maritime character was once as distinguished for its religious manifestations, as that of any other class; and, as we have already seen, it contains many a hopeful feature still. In regard to Mariners' Churches, the regularity of attendance, and peculiar strictness of attention, give unvarying occasion for both ministers and patrons of Seamen's Friend Societies, "to thank God and take courage." Their attendance is numerous, . . . and their attention and decorum have ever been most striking, and

often deeply affecting. There is, indeed, an intenseness of attention—an openness of ear and heart—a tenderness and simplicity of feeling, so remarkable, as to form a uniform characteristic of these interesting congregations. And—what is better still—numbers of the class are at this moment adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things. God is anticipating his church in the improvement of seamen. As he commenced a divine renovation among them during the war, when his people on land were slumbering on the subject, so does he still continue to go before his church, shaming their indolence and their fears, exceeding their hopes, and encouraging them to attempt, and to expect great things.

But would piety improve our seamen, as such? “I have had the honor,” writes Captain Sir W. E. Parry, “and, I may truly say, the happiness, of commanding British seamen, under circumstances requiring the utmost activity, implicit and immediate obedience, and the most rigid attention to discipline and good order: and I am sure that the maintenance of all these was, in a great measure, owing to the blessing of God upon our humble endeavors to improve the moral and religious character of our men. The friends of religion will feel a pleasure in having the fact announced, that the very best seamen on board the *Hecla*—such I mean as were always called upon in any cases of extraordinary urgency—were, without exception, those who had thought most seriously on religious sub-

jects; and that if a still more scrupulous selection were to be made out of that number, the choice would fall, without hesitation, on two or three individuals, possessing dispositions and sentiments eminently Christian."

At the anniversary of "the Naval and Military Bible Society," 1818, when the Duke of York presided, Admiral Sir James Saumarez stated, "that he had uniformly found, that the best and bravest sailors were those who habitually read their Bibles. In allusion to a victory gained under his command, he added, that, he could only say, that it was solely through the Bible, and from a firm confidence in the grace of God, which that sacred volume inspired, that he had been animated to combat the dangers before him and be successful. . . . Every ship did its duty that day; but it was in the name of our God that we set up our banners, and the Lord has heard our prayers. To fight in humble dependence on the divine protection, and with a simple reliance on the divine mercy, through the Redeemer, is, and always must be, the highway to victory and honor."

And is there no heroism in the Bible? "The time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jephtha; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the

aliens." With these ancient Jewish heroes, piety was not only no impediment to success, it was the very principle and secret of their bravery and triumph.

Religion, in every age, has been able to boast heroes more distinguished than any other cause, whether the object for which they contended was their altars, their liberty, or their native land. Have the religious Vaudois, ever given their oppressors reason to laugh at their piety, when encountered in battle? They have always fought as from heaven. Did the Puritans—whatever the character of their quarrel, just or unjust—ever bring disgrace on English bravery? did they not cause it to be universally respected? Did not Sidney, the bravest of the brave, make religion his boast, and wear it as an ornament? Or did piety impair the courage of a Gardiner, or a Blackader, a Melville, or a Burn?

What *can* be the meaning of the question then—whether piety would improve the character of our seamen, as such? If there be a God, and if that Supreme Majesty beholds all the dwellers upon earth, am I likely to acquit myself with less fidelity and vigor for believing that I am acting in his presence? If there be a region of blessedness to which the spirits of the just ascend at death, am I likely to be enervated by the belief that Providence will either cover me with its shield in the day of battle, or else will conduct me to unmingled happiness above? Am I likely to conduct myself with

less consistency and dignity for believing that I am an object of interest to an Infinite Being?

Piety alone is wanting to make the character of the seaman complete. Only let this divine element be infused into it, and the peace which it imparts will render him cheerful and happy, the new motives to obedience which it supplies will give stability and principle to his discipline, while the animating and heavenly hopes which it inspires will raise his mere animal spirits into a lofty moral courage equal to any extremity in which he can be placed.

All that we want are energy and activity equal to the occasion. And shall not these be found? O that we could engage if only a fraction of the enterprise and enthusiasm which any one of the great pecuniary speculations of the day can command—and the work would be done! O, that we could have that energy “sanctified by the word of God and by prayer,”—and the success of the work would be certain!

Let me appeal to that large and influential portion of the community who annually visit our coasts for the purposes of recreation and health. “Who amongst you can stand on the margin of our coast, and look over the outstretched world of waters, rolling at his feet, without being pained at heart while he thinks of what sin hath done in the world, and especially on what it hath done among those who have gone down to the sea in ships? Those waters which, on many accounts, form the

grandest subject for contemplation, are at once recognized as the grave of myriads of seamen, who, from generation to generation, passed through all the toils, and sufferings, and dangers of a maritime life, living quite unmindful of the great end of their creation, and dying without one scriptural evidence of ever having exercised repentance towards God, or faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Their lives were, with a very few exceptions, a scene of labor, blasphemy, ignorance, and debauchery; and most of their deaths were sudden, and their end without hope. Infidelity, and affected charity, may frown and condemn these remarks; but alas! neither zeal nor affected charity can disprove their truth. . . . We cannot undo what has been done, but, by the help of God, we may stem the torrent of evil."* Ponder the condition of our seamen. Pity them. Render your sea-side visits conducive to their improvement. And come to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

Pious sailors! aspire to imitate the example of those distinguished men whose names honor your calling, and who were called by Christ, while following their maritime occupation, to become his disciples. Like Andrew, evince a zeal to bring others to the Saviour whom you have found. In all your endeavors to benefit your shipmates, aim to unite the boldness of Peter, the energy of James, and the affectionate earn-

* *The Ocean.*

estness of John. You have been called to be followers of Christ under circumstances which mark you out for great usefulness, and which loudly call on you to be active, exemplary, and faithful unto death.

Christian merchants ! will not you come forward to support this enterprise ? Self-interest demands that you should ; for an improvement in the character of seamen would be an increase of security for your property. Gratitude demands it ; for you derive your wealth from their instrumentality. Christian consistency demands it ; for if they minister to you in temporal things, ought not you to take a deep interest in their religious welfare ?

Political economists, and legislators ! here is a noble sphere of action for you. The moral improvement of our seamen would be a great saving to the whole community, and would supply the place of a thousand laws—for it would be making them a law to themselves. Legislative enactments can only save them from injustice, and social degradation ; but here is a method of raising them to respectability and happiness, and of rendering them blessings to society.

Members of Bible, Missionary, Tract, and School Societies ! here is a new and powerful claim upon you. Here are thousands of men who might be made your agents to the ends of the earth—will you not aid in the work ? At present, they form a source of weakness and discouragement to many of your agents, and a

formidable obstacle to the accomplishment of those plans which are nearest your hearts—you not assist to improve them? You are asked to apply the funds of your respective institutions to the object for which we are pleading—though were you to do so, to a certain extent, you would only be exercising a wise economy, and a far-sighted, magnanimous benevolence; that which we urge you to do is to join with us in our solicitude and efforts for our seafaring fellow-countrymen, as the means of certainly promoting your dearest objects in foreign lands.

Christians, of all denominations! do you desire a new sphere for your benevolent exertions? Here is a wide field comparatively untouched. And, O, if *numbers* can move *you* to compassion, as they did your Lord, here are thousands, hundreds of thousands, scattered as sheep having no shepherd. If a warm and generous heart—if humanity, enterprise, and courage, are qualities to be valued—here is a class of men who possess them to a degree that even the enemies they have vanquished have often been constrained to admire: and shall they who are the pride of the nation, be the reproach of the church? If any amount of services can excite our gratitude—here is the class to whose instrumentality, in war, America is to look for defence, and to whose occupation, in peace, she owes it that “her merchants are princes, that the harvest of the river is her revenue, and that she is the mart of nations.” If a sense of

past negligence should urge us to present activity—here is a class of whom it may be said, “much as the wealth and power of America depend on her seamen, the souls of these mariners, the salvation of their souls, who is there, the world over to care for it, to look after them, to speak to them kindly, to show them the way to the Saviour of the world? Age after age she has neglected them, and they have neglected themselves; and now they are far from God, living in sin, dying in misery, and passing away beyond the kind voice of mercy forever.” If extreme danger can interest us in the behalf of those who encounter it—here are men whose time is spent “in perils of waters, in perils in the sea,” and whose whole life may be looked on as a narrow escape from death. If peculiar religious privations deserve our pity—here are men whose exigencies in this respect are obvious and extreme, and the result of which appears in the proverbial depravity of the class. If a state of great temptation, and exposure to evil, if helplessness, debasement, and misery should engage our concern—here is a class whose condition, in these respects is so crying, that men of the world are touched and moved by it, and are heard calling upon each other to hasten to their deliverance, and to assist in their protection. If the sight of a vast agency, which might be consecrated to the noblest ends, producing and diffusing evil in all directions, can inspire us with concern—here is a large class of men, spreading contamination by their evil example

at home, and proving a curse among the heathen abroad, though there is much in their character and calling which marks them out for extensive usefulness. If the example of Christ drawing us, or his authority commanding, if the successes of others encouraging us, or the glowing language of prophecy cheering us—if *any* thing *can* move us to ameliorate the condition of our seafaring fellow-countrymen, then by all these urgent considerations, let us make the attempt, and *make it at once*.

And is there nothing in this object to kindle and inflame a sacred ambition? Ancient mythology tells us that the inventors of ships took rank among the gods, and that even the ships were translated to the heavens, where they still shine among the constellations. But honors such as heathen fable never pictured await the Christian actors in this glorious enterprise. For we know who it is that hath said, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Let us then make the attempt proposed, and *make it at once*.

And shall not the prospect of the happy scene which shall result from our endeavors, fill us with zeal? Only let us commence the work in a spirit suited to its lofty nature, and on a scale commensurate with its magnitude, others will be raised up to sustain and carry it on, and on, till every sailor shall become a Christian missionary, and every sea-port a Tyre, whose mer-

chandize shall be holiness to the Lord, and every ship a floating church ; and the ocean itself, resembling the " sea of glass like unto crystal," which circulates around the throne above, shall become a holy element, reflecting the smile and the glory of God. Come, then, and in the name of God, *let us commence the work, and let us commence it at once.*



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We wish not only to add our testimony to the excellency of this book, but to urge it upon the attention of our readers. We commend it to the attention of business men, and especially young men.

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[Extract from an extended Notice in the Christian Review.]

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Twenty-five thousand copies of this work have been sold in the United States, besides several editions in England. It has also been printed in French, and is about to be published in the German language; which shows that it is a work of no ordinary interest.

[Extract from Mrs. Hale's Ladies' Magazine.]

We are glad to announce this work to our readers. The character of Mrs. Judson is an honor to American ladies. The ardent faith that incited her to engage in an enterprise so full of perils; the fortitude she exhibited under trials which it seems almost incredible a delicate woman could have surmounted; her griefs, and the hopes that supported her, should be read in her own expressive language. Her talents were unquestionably of a high order; but the predominant quality of her mind was its energy. The work contains, besides the life of Mrs. Judson, a History of the Burman Mission, with a sketch of the Geography, &c., of that country, and a Map accompanying, and a beautifully engraved portrait of Mrs. Judson.

[From the London New Baptist Miscellany.]

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[From the Boston Recorder.]

A Memoir of Dr. Carey must of necessity give an account of the rise of Baptist Missions in the East Indies, their embarrassments, their struggles, and their success. For this reason, as well as on account of the character of Dr. Carey, it must be a work of intense interest.

[From Zion's Herald.]

The compiler observes in his Preface, that his endeavor has been to exhibit the Christian and the missionary, rather than the scholar. We think he has succeeded. It is in the character of a Christian missionary that Dr. Carey preëminently shines. It was through his labors, under the blessing of God, that a character and stability were given to missionary operations in India, which have justly made them the admiration of the Christian world. We compliment the publishers for the beautiful style in which they have issued this book.

[From the Richmond Religious Herald.]

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[Extracts from the Preface.]

In the following Notes, I have endeavored to avoid prolixity, and yet not to pass over, without explanation, passages that really need explanation. * * * A person who may use this book, either for personal information, or for enabling him to instruct others, must submit to some labor. Frequently passages of Scripture are merely referred to, and the benefit to be drawn from those passages will require that they be examined. Particularly will this be found necessary in the case of a Sabbath School teacher, or the leader of a Bible Class. If such a person depends on this book as a help, he will not find his work all done for him here; but he will find, I trust, materials afforded him, by which he *may do his work himself*.

Such is the nature of the work I proposed to myself in this book, that I have not felt at liberty, even if I had been disposed or able, to indulge in flights of fancy, or to seek any rhetorical excellence, beyond a perspicuous and simple statement of facts or opinions. Nor have I made many moral reflections. Sometimes I have suggested topics of pious meditation and of useful practical remark; at other times, I have not done so. I have been guided, in this matter, by the nature of different passages, and by the impressions on my own mind.

That my views of some passages should differ from those of other writers, is to be expected; but that I have endeavored to convey to my readers the mind of the Holy Spirit, and to shed light over a part of the sacred volume, is my delightful consciousness. The usefulness of the effort must be left to Him, from whom come all good desires and designs, whose blessing is necessary for every undertaking, and "whose approbation can prosper even mine."

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